

AL-GHAZALI'S BOOK OF FEAR AND HOPE

BY

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PREFACE

I wish to record my sincere thanks and to acknowledge my indebtedness to my former teacher, the Reverend E. F. F. Bishop, who first suggested that I might translate this work and who gave me much help and encouragement in its early stages. I have also enjoyed generous co-operation from my colleagues in Glasgow. Dr. J. S. Trimingham gave up much time to discuss translation problems with me and Emeritus Professor James Robson gave me the benefit of his advice in respect of residual difficulties. This is, so far as I am aware, a pioneer translation into English and there are a few places where I am not entirely satisfied with the translation nor convinced that the sense of the Arabic has been pierced. It will be a task for future translators to clear up these obscurities.

I also wish to express my sincere thanks to the Publications Standing Committee of the University of Glasgow whose generosity has made the publication of this work possible and, in particular, I am greatly indebted to the University Librarian, Mr. R. O. Mac Kenna, for his guidance and helpfulness. I am also grateful to Miss D. E. Collins, Messrs. Faber and Faber, Ltd. and Messrs. A. P. Watt and Son for the permission given to quote two extracts from G. K. Chesterton's *Chaucer*. Finally I wish to express my thanks to the house of E. J. Brill for undertaking the publication of this book and my deep appreciation of the skill and craftsmanship with which they have produced it.

INTRODUCTION

Abū Hāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (1058-1111) wrote his greatest work, *The Revival of The Religious Sciences*, while he was living the life of an ascetic in Damascus c. 1096 A.D. He had been prostrated by a tremendous inner crisis and had been swamped by intellectual doubt and spiritual debility. Relinquishing his theological chair in Baghdad and turning his back on a brilliant academic career, he gave up wealth and position and announced his intention of going on pilgrimage to Mecca. The aim of the itinerary which he now purposed, in the course of which he was to submit himself to the most rigorous of ascetic disciplines, was to follow the Ṣūfī path to "the light of unveiling", and to discover a 'knowledge' which had eluded him while he was employed with the categories of systematic theology. It was thus he came to Damascus and found leisure to write his *magnum opus*¹.

The plan of the work is that of four 'quarters' or volumes each containing ten books. The general title of the first volume is *Worship*, and all the books (with the exception of I and II which contain an epistemological and theological introduction) can be subsumed under this head. Similarly with the second volume whose general title is *Personal Behaviour* and the third which deals with *Mortal Sins*. The fourth volume, of which *The Book of Fear and Hope* is the third book, is concerned with *The Means of Salvation*, that is, the techniques or therapies by which the cure of the soul is achieved. This book is an interesting sample of al-Ghazālī's work in his fourth volume².

TEXT

There are practically no textual difficulties. I have translated from the 1939 Cairo edition, and, in the few places where I thought textual corruption to be possible, I have consulted the 1908 Cairo

¹ See especially W. M. Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī*, 1953. This contains a translation of al-Ghazālī's autobiographical work, *al-Munqidh min ad-Dalāl* (pp. 19-85).

² See especially the digest of the contents of *The Revival of The Religious Sciences* in G. H. Bousquet, *Ghazālī, Ih'yā Oulōūm ed-Dīn ou Vivification des Sciences De La Foi*, 1955. Also the plan of the work in S. 81-82.

edition. The one or two examples of incorrect copying which I have found in the 1939 text are noted in the course of the translation. The translation omits all honorific ascriptions. The references in the margins are to the pagination of the 1939 edition.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE BOOK

I propose to say nothing at all here about the historical relationships of *The Book of Fear and Hope*, either about its indebtedness to antecedents or its influence on the subsequent course of thought. My intention is to give an account of the argument of the book and to indicate where its intrinsic value may be thought to lie.

The Book of Fear and Hope might well be described as an essay in the tactics of propagating the Faith to the community at large. The principal objective is to outline the salutary employment of fear and hope in the cure of the soul. The book may be said to deal with a topic of pastoral psychology and is a good sample of the work of al-Ghazālī in so far as it illustrates some of the reasons why he has attained so commanding a position within Islām and exercised so great an influence on the course of theological thought. He is in the best sense a popular theologian. His primary concern is to secure practical results on the broadest front, and, in his thinking, his paramount consideration is to promote the most salubrious climate for the whole community of Faith. He consequently disposes of other claims according to the way in which they react on this supreme demand.

The Scholars are only a small part of the community and their liberty must not be a liberty to create confusion among the rank and file by throwing doubt on the clear-cut simplicity of their affirmations of faith. The spiritual diet of the general run of believers is best kept in balance by feeding them judiciously on the Qur'ān and the Traditions. When scholars communicate their predilections to the people, this has the effect of blurring the simplicity of categorical statements of faith and of introducing a dialectic with which minds of ordinary calibre cannot cope¹. This is the gravamen of his charge against the systematic theologians, and it rests partly on a careful empirical examination of the actual levels of mental endowment in the community and a sober

¹ pp. 68-70.

assessment of what can be expected from it of intellectual endeavour. In his polemic against the theologians the virtues of al-Ghazālī's style, his power and incisiveness, are seen to their best advantage. He is a shrewd and entertaining polemicist and he writes with the gusto of a talented pamphleteer. Whatever judgement is passed on the substance of these passages, no one is likely to complain that they are dull or wanting in distinction of style.

If observation led al-Ghazālī to conclude that men vary greatly in their intellectual capacities and that most men are but modestly endowed, the same activity prompted him to conclude that there are great differences of temperament among men and that this must be seriously reckoned with in any attempt to fashion effective machinery for the propagation of the Faith. This insight is applied to the instruments of fear and hope¹. On the one hand al-Ghazālī discourages hope where the proper basis for it does not exist; on the other, he indicates that it is a therapy which can be applied with profit to two classes of men, those overcome by fear and those paralysed by despair. His stringent formulation of the conditions of hope is directed against such as suffer from a false sense of security and are deluded as to their true condition by a brash self-assurance².

Hope then has therapeutic value for men so burdened with a sense of sin as almost to despair of God's pardon, and it is particularly valuable at the onset of death³, since it encourages a man to be optimistic about his prospects with God and to fasten his thoughts on His pardon rather than on his own sinfulness. There is a sense in which hope is a higher motive than fear, since hope is dominated by love and the creatures nearest to God are those who love Him most⁴. Yet hope can only operate beneficially within a very limited area of human life, because it is not a therapeutic technique well-adapted to the condition of most men. The most of men are so temperamentally poised that to treat their condition with hope would simply increase their peril and hasten their passage to perdition⁵. The aim of the therapeutic techniques of fear and hope is to repair deficiencies and to correct excesses, and so restore a proper balance to the soul. This is the desiderated posture

¹ p. 1.

² pp. 4-5.

³ p. 49.

⁴ pp. 6-7, 45.

⁵ pp. 9-10, 25.

and hope and fear should be employed, as a skilful and discriminating physician would use the materials of medicine, in order to compensate for harmful eccentricities and bring back the soul to the point of equilibrium¹.

al-Ghazālī's analysis of fear is more elaborate than that of hope, and he takes up the greater part of the book with it. This is due partly to his conviction that fear has the greater relevance in the contemporary situation², but it is also accounted for by its place in his gnostic or mystical teaching, and its importance for his theology of which predestination is the keystone³. Fear may be the consequence of 'knowledge'⁴ of God or of the 'knowledge' of one's sins, or of both of these together. Among those who fear there is an *élite* who make up one class, and believers of more ordinary calibre who compose the other. These two groups are distinguished in various ways. The spiritual aristocrats are the Gnostics; the members of the less exalted group are 'The Sound in Faith' or, more literally, the Healthy. The gnostic fears what is 'not abhorrent in itself' (i.e. abhorrent to God); the man who is healthy fears God because of his sins. The fear of the gnostic is the fruit of 'knowledge' of God, and the chief objects of his fear are predestination and the evil of the Seal. The fear of the man who is healthy derives not from what he 'knows' by insight, but from what he accepts on authority. In so far as the gnostic fears what is abhorrent in itself he fears the veil, that is, permanent alienation from God⁵. In another passage al-Ghazālī offers an alternative classification and contrasts the fear of the gnostics with that of the practitioners, the healthy, the ascetics and the body of the people⁶.

To indicate that fear is a mature gnostic trait al-Ghazālī relates a tradition concerning Muhammad and Abū Bakr which shows that fear of the strategems of God is a more advanced station than reliance on the promises of God, because it can derive only from perfection of 'knowledge'⁷. Here again, however, his characteristic insistence on balance and moderation reappears. This gnostic fear

¹ pp. 10-11, 17.

² pp. 48-50.

³ pp. 33-36.

⁴ Formations from *ilm* I have translated as *know* and *knowledge* or *science*; formations from *'rf* as 'know' and 'knowledge'.

⁵ pp. 26-7, 53.

⁶ p. 37.

⁷ p. 59.

has to be kept in balance, for excess of it would lead to mental deterioration and death¹.

Of wider application than this gnostic fear which is the preserve of the few is the fear employed as a therapeutic instrument in the pastoral care of the many. This fear may be deficient or excessive and what is desiderated is the middle way between these two extremes. Deficient fear produces no more than sentimental regret; effective fear restrains the members from disobedience and binds them to obedience and "whatever does not take effect in the members is no more than an impulse and fleeting motion which does not deserve the name of fear"². al-Ghazālī's dislike of extravagance and immoderation appears again in his citing of a pungent aphorism of Sahl, at-Tustari, an earlier Sūfī, who used to say to novices who persisted in fasting: "Keep your wits. God has never had a saint who was mentally deficient"³.

Fear, which is worthy of the name only if it has an effect on behaviour, is differentiated into different ranks or degrees according to its mode of regulating behaviour. If it is an incentive only to chastity, it possesses a degree. Higher in merit is the fear which produces abstinence and higher still that which produces piety. "And the most ultimate of its degrees is to produce the degrees of the *Sincere* which is the tearing of one away, outwardly and inwardly, from what is other than God; and this is the most ultimate of its commendable characteristics, and it is accompanied with preservation of health and mind"⁴.

As a therapeutic device fear is directed particularly against those who suffer from the disease of fancied security⁵. Yet here again there is counterpoise in al-Ghazālī's thinking, for he says that ordinary mortals must not be too aware of the nature of God and that an admixture of negligence is a mercy for them. What negligence does to maintain the equilibrium in ordinary believers hope does for the gnostic⁶.

It will have been observed that al-Ghazālī makes large use of the medical idiom. This is more than an accident of style; it points to the nature and area of his concern. He is not interested in theological

¹ p. 27.

² p. 30.

³ p. 32.

⁴ p. 32.

⁵ pp. 41-42.

⁶ pp. 60-61.

discussion, in the inspection of premisses or the reappraisal of fundamental positions. This is a kind of activity to which he is antipathetic, and which, in his view, is full of pitfalls and perils. His concern is with the correct and judicious employment of fear and hope as therapies in the cure of souls. He is consequently interested in the discriminating diagnosis of spiritual ills, since it is the mastery of such skills that will keep the community in good spiritual health. He is a kind of medical officer of health; his sense of responsibility ranges over the entire community and his province is the soul. Some of the most colourful passages of the book are, as a consequence, couched in the idiom of medicine. There is the division of the community of believers (already noted) into gnostics and healthy (*sālih*); there is his disapproval of the category of *more meritorious* in relation to fear and hope and his assertion that to ask whether fear or hope is the higher good is to ask what is, for the most part, a spurious question. The category of greatest utility and widest application in this connection is that of *more salutary* (*aslah*)—again a formation from *slh*¹. Fear and hope are not contradictory to each other, but are interdependent and complementary therapies. Supposition derives from the imbalance of fear and hope, representing an intensification of either fear or hope, depending on which is the dominant partner. Supposition is therefore either a hoping for the best or a fearing the worst².

al-Ghazālī's method throughout his work is to employ the Qur'ān, Traditions and Reports³, in association with his original observations, as additional incentives to fear and hope. It may be conjectured that it was also his intention to demonstrate in this way his own conformity with these canons of orthodoxy. His procedure is thus Reflection, Qur'ān, Traditions and Reports. This is in fact not so serious a handicap as might be supposed and does not subdue the force of his originality nor weaken the sinewy predilections which are a feature of his writing. It is true, however, that, when he embarks on theology proper his freedom of manoeuvre is somewhat reduced. I am not suggesting that he found this confinement irksome. All the indications in this book are that he considered it expedient and salutary to close the door for ever on any speculative re-exploration of those fundamental questions to

¹ p. 46.

² pp. 41-42.

³ p. 11, n. 2

which normative answers had been given. The 'health' of the community required this, and for him that was far and away the most compelling consideration. Thus it seems to me that in the section on 'The Evil of the Seal'¹, which is more directly theological than other portions of the book, there may be detected in places a certain diminution of vigour and incisiveness and a tendency to be less impressive than elsewhere. al-Ghazālī says the gnostic's fear is such that he is sandwiched between Predestination and the Seal, and this, in another connection, describes rather well his own theological boundaries and lack of elbow room.

The evil of the Seal has two degrees, a major and a minor; the first derives from apostasy and doubt, and the second from the domination of the heart by worldly affairs and lusts. Everything hinges on the state dominating a man's heart at the instant in which death finds him, but, whereas the major Seal is irrevocable², it is not entirely impossible to make amends, where the Seal does not involve apostasy and doubt³. The Seal is the confirmation of what has been predestined for a man, and its terror is multiplied by this tie-up with the mystery of predestination, for it may come as a sudden and unique reversal initiated by God, the Reverser of hearts, impressing on a man's life the Seal of doom⁴.

Two causes of the major Seal are specified; the first, erroneous belief concerning God which cannot be mitigated by practical piety; the second, weakness of faith in the root and the mastery of the love of the world. With respect to the first cause it may operate through a man's active participation in speculative theology or through his acceptance on authority of the results of speculation. Here the extremely serious view which al-Ghazālī takes of intellectual error in relation to the doctrine of God is clearly seen. Such error taints not only the thinking of a few speculative minds, but the beliefs of the many, before whom the Scholars exhibit the wares of their intellects⁵. It is these considerations which regulate his generally unfavourable attitude to speculative theology. The minor Seal also has two causes, much disobedience and weakness of faith. This is elucidated with reference to the state of sleep, since death is akin to sleep, and the throes of death, as a time of

¹ pp. 64-80.

² p. 64.

³ p. 65.

⁴ pp. 59-61, 76-78.

⁵ pp. 66-70.

disclosure, akin to dreams. As the images of dreams reflect the objects seen in waking-life, so the images associated with the throes of death will reflect those activities and preoccupations which have been the familiars of a man throughout his life, for a man dies as he has lived¹.

It will now be obvious, therefore, that we are not to expect from al-Ghazālī a treatment of hope, amounting to an eschatological discussion, since this was the kind of activity which he was condemning in the theologians. There is no attempt to assess what the ultimate ingredients of hope are. There are the concrete descriptions of the Garden and the Fire in the Qur'ān with their uncompromisingly corporeal imagery; there is the Day of Resurrection and Judgement, inescapable and final. It would have been about this kind of material that a theologian might have employed himself in order to initiate an eschatological discussion and ask fundamental questions about the nature of hope and its implications for the individual and the community. In al-Ghazālī's view the premisses were finally settled and were not a subject for further enquiry. It was enough to assert belief in the Judgement, the Garden and the Fire, and then to devote all his energies to devising effective pastoral techniques for bringing men to safety and the Garden. There is consequently nothing of the debating of the problems of theodicy which is inseparable from the topic of eschatological hope in the Jewish apocalyptic literature, where the End is essentially the moment of comprehensive and retrospective forensic readjustment by which all the wrongs of historical existence will be righted and its unresolved contradictions satisfactorily removed. al-Ghazālī's point of view is correctly conveyed by his juxtaposition of fear and hope. He knows that despair and not fear is the opposite of hope, but these are not the two poles between which his discussion moves². He mentions despair only in so far as it is a pathological condition which is to be treated with the therapy of hope in the same way as excessive fear is to be treated. He does not contrast despair with hope after the fashion of an eschatological discussion in the context of Christian theology, where the polarity of hope and despair is the point of departure.

This somewhat negative attitude to speculative theology is compensated for by a positive emphasis on a different kind of

¹ pp. 72-75.
² p. 6.

research into the nature of God, conducted not by means of the categories of speculative thought but by the "light of disclosure" (or: *unveiling*). The way to a complete 'knowledge' (or: *gnosis*) of God is along the Sūfi path. This teaching is small in bulk in the work under review, but there are one or two explicit statements of it, while, always underlying his negative attitude to philosophical enquiry into the nature of God, there is the implicit contrast between knowledge or science (*'ilm*) and 'knowledge' or gnosis (*ma'rifa*). The first is a defective and dangerous mode of apprehending God, the second a self-authenticating insight. Among the items of positive Sūfi teaching is his account of the stations by way of which the seeker attains to the goal of the Sūfi path. "And no station can succeed the root of assurance except fear and hope and only patience can succeed these two, and accompanying it is spiritual combat and utter devotion to God outwardly and inwardly. And for the person to whom the Way has been opened up there can be no station after spiritual combat except guidance and 'knowledge', and only the station of love and intimacy can succeed 'knowledge'; and following necessarily on love is satisfaction with the action of the Beloved and confidence in His care which is trustfulness"¹. There are also his definitions of state and station² and his description of the man who has outgrown fear and hope, "whose heart is ruled by truth and who lives in the present through his seeing the majesty of truth perpetually"³.

Of esoteric or theosophical doctrines there are few traces. Sleep is believed to be a time of revelation, for in it a man is withdrawn from the cares and distractions of this world and has his inward eye focused on the Preserved Tablet⁴ on which the undisclosed secrets of the future time are inscribed⁵. Also the Throne is represented as a kind of recording apparatus on which men's states are impressed to be reproduced at the End as a witness against them⁶. The lodging of the blessed soul in the interim period between death and the Last Judgement is in the crops of green birds which are suspended beneath the Throne. Whatever the state of the soul, be it blessed or reprobate, it will be reunited to the body for the final forensic act⁷.

¹ pp. 51-52, cf. 38.

² p. 2.

³ p. 25.
⁴ p. 68, n. 2. ⁵ pp. 68, 74.

⁶ p. 74.

⁷ p. 66.

In conclusion it may be reiterated that the over-riding concern of al-Ghazālī is to devise means by which the many may participate in religion and be exposed to its salutary effects. He consequently confronts courageously what moderns call the problem of communication, although, as I have tried to show, he has his own distinctive definition of the problem. He is not conscious that there is any difficulty in communicating to the rank and file the rudiments of the Faith; he is not interested in any essay in reinterpretation. His preoccupation is with effective and salutary pastoral procedures which will make religion a dominant force in the lives of people of whom too much is not to be expected. This is a serious consideration for every religious thinker, since the appeal and claims of religion must traverse the multiplicity of human life, and its word must go out in such a way that the common people hear it and are afforded a genuine opportunity of response and participation. Religion must not be so formulated as to become a fascinating intellectual exercise for the scholars, nor yet a sublime and other-worldly saintliness for the few who are cast in the mould of saints. The therapeutic virtue ascribed to fear may seem to us to be antique or even repulsive, but we ought to give al-Ghazālī credit for his unfaltering awareness that this kind of pressing problem does exist, whatever we may think the solution to be. On this problem and its relevance to our modern society there is a gem of a digression in Chesterton's book on Chaucer:

Thus the Canterbury pilgrimage takes on a very symbolic social character and is indeed the progress which emerged out of the mediaeval into the modern world. All modern critics can take pleasure in the almost modern realism of the portraiture; in the veracity of types and the vigour of the quarrels. But the modern problem is more and more the problem of keeping the company together at all; and the company was kept together because it was going to Canterbury As their counterparts stand to-day it is easier to imagine the Wife of Bath wanting to go sun-bathing at Margate, or the Clerk instantly returning, with refined disgust, to Oxford, rather than to imagine either of them wanting to toil on together to a particular tomb in Canterbury. For the moment this division of heart is masked by a certain heartiness in the modern pursuit of mere games and pleasures, but you cannot make a complete social system out of

games and pleasures. You cannot in some dark hour of peril ask thousands to die for the Derby, or even to be taxed to death for the International Golf Championship. A nation that has nothing but its amusements will not be amused for very long. Moreover the amusements are at least as narrow as the devotions and dedications. You will not persuade the Clerk of Oxford to go to Ramsgate merely to see the Miller win the Ram. You will not persuade the Miller to go to Oxford, which might well have been named, at that time, after the Dumb Ox of Philosophy: St. Thomas of Aquin. But they were both ready to go together to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury. The real modern problem is—what pilgrimage have we on which these two different men will ride together? ¹

¹ G. K. Chesterton, *Chaucer*, 1948, pp. 182-183.

ABBREVIATIONS

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THE BOOK OF FEAR AND HOPE

It is the third book of the volume on *The Means of Salvation* of the books of *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*. In the name of God, The Merciful, the Compassionate. 138

Praise be to God whose loving kindness and reward are hoped for, whose strategems and punishment are feared; who keeps alive the hearts of His saints with the breath of hope in Him, so that He may urge them on with the kindnesses of His benefits to alight in His courtyard¹ and to swerve from His house of tribulation which is the abode of His enemies. And with the lashes of threatening and His harsh upbraiding He has driven the faces of those who shun His presence towards the house of His reward and preferment; and he has blocked them from thwarting His leaders and becoming the butt of His wrath and vengeance by leading the different types of His creatures with chains of violence and coercion, and reins of compassion and graciousness, to His Garden. And the blessing be on Muhammad, Master of His prophets and the most elect of His caliphs, and on his family and Companions and relations.

To proceed. Hope and fear are two wings by means of which those who are brought near fly to every commendable station, and two mounts on which every steep ascent of the paths of the next world is traversed. And nothing but the reins of hope will lead to the vicinity of the Merciful and the joy of the Gardens the man who is distant from hoping and heavy with burdens, who is encompassed with what the heart abhors and with toils of members and limbs. And nothing shall avert from the fire of Gehenna and the painful punishment the man who is encompassed with the blandishments of lusts and the marvels of pleasures except the scourges of threatening and the assaults of violence. Consequently there is nothing for it but an exposition of the essence and merits of them both, as well as the way of arriving at a junction between the two of them, in spite of their polarity and mutual antipathy. And we join the mention of them in a single book which is com-

¹ Margaret Smith, G. 165 translates الْزَرْلِ بِنَاءً "to arrive at absorption in Himself". There is, however, an antithetic parallelism in the construction of the preamble and 'courtyard' corresponds to 'house of tribulation'.

prised of two parts, the first part concerning hope and the second part fear. As for the first part it is made up of an exposition of the essence of hope and an exposition of its merit; and an exposition of the therapy of hope and the way in which hope is induced by it.

EXPOSITION OF THE ESSENCE OF HOPE

Know that hope is among the sum of the stations of the pilgrims and the states of the seekers. And the description *station* is given only when it is permanent and endures, and *state* only when transitoriness is hinted at. Just as yellow is divided into *permanent* such as the yellow of gold; *transitory* such as the yellow of fear; and what comes between these two like the yellow of a sick person. Similarly the attributes of the heart follow these divisions and whatever is not permanent is called a state, because it soon changes, and this is continually happening in any description of the heart.

We are dealing at present with the essence of hope. Hope also comprises state, knowledge and deed. Knowledge is the cause which produces the state and the state decrees the deed. Hope is the comprehensive name of the three. Its exposition is that everything that confronts you is either what is abhorred or what is desired, and is divided into what is existent at the moment, what has existed in the past, and what is expected in the future. When what has existed in the past occurs to your mind, it is called remembering and recollecting; if what occurs to your mind is existent at the moment, it is called finding and tasting and perceiving. It is called finding because it is a state which you find for yourself. And, if the existence of something in the future occurs to your mind and prevails over your heart, it is called expectation and anticipation. If the thing expected is abhorred, with pain in the heart resulting from it, it is called fear and distress. If it is something desired, with pleasure and relief of heart resulting from the expectation of it and the attachment of the heart to it and the occurrence of its existence to your mind, that relief is hope.

Hence hope is the relief of the heart, because of the expectation of what it esteems desirable. But the desirable thing which is anticipated must have a cause, so, if the expectation of it is on account of the obtaining of the majority of the means to it, the name of hope in relation to it is justified. If that expectation is in spite of the defectiveness of the means to it and their disorder, the

name of self-deceit and stupidity is more justified in relation to the expectation than that of hope. If the means are not specified either as existent or in mutual contradiction, the name of wishful thinking is more justified in relation to the expectation of it, because it is an expectation which is devoid of a cause. And, in any circumstance, the name of hope and fear does not apply to what is determined. For one does not say: I hope for the rising of the sun at the time of sunrise and I fear its setting at the time of sunset, because that is determined. But one does say: I hope that the rain will fall and I fear lest it should be cut off.

And the Spiritual Directors¹ teach that this present world is the field of the next world, and the heart is as the earth, and faith is as the seed in it, and obedience is conducive to the turning over of the earth and the cleansing of it and the digging of channels and the leading of waters to them; and the heart which is infatuated with this present world and submerged in it is like swampy ground in which the seed does not fructify. And the Day of Resurrection is the day of reaping, and no one reaps except what he has sown, and only he who has sown the seed of faith grows crops. Rarely is faith profitable in company with a vicious heart whose moral traits are tainted just as seed does not fructify in swampy soil. And it is fitting that the hope of the creature for pardon should equal the hope of the owner of the crops.

For everyone who seeks good ground and casts into it seed of first quality which is neither mouldy nor worm-eaten, who thereafter furnishes it with what is necessary to it, that is, the conducting of water to it at appropriate times; who then clears the ground of thorns and weeds and everything that obstructs the growth of the seed or makes it rot; who then sits down and expects from the bounty of God the warding off of thunderbolts and blights, until his crop is mature and he arrives at his goal—his expectation is called hope. And, if he scatters his seed in ground which is baked hard or swampy, which is so elevated that the water does not flow into it, and does not labour one whit in the preparation of the seed—if he then expects a harvest from it, his expectation is called stupidity and self-deceit, not hope. And, if he scatters seed in ground which is good but without water, and proceeds to wait for the waters of the rains where they neither prevail nor are cut off, his expectation is called wishful thinking and not hope.

¹ Literally: the masters of hearts.

Therefore the name of hope is legitimate only in relation to the expectation of a thing desired, all of whose means, which come within the choice of the creature, have been facilitated, and only what does not come within his choice remains, and this is the bounty of God in repelling birds and blights.

140 So when the creature sows the seed of faith and irrigates it with the water of obedience and cleanses the heart from the thorns of vicious moral traits and expects from the bounty of God his being established in that course until death and the virtue of the Seal that gives access to pardon, such expectation as this is hope in its essence, commendable in itself, and giving him an incentive for perseverance and endurance, in accordance with the means of faith, in perfecting the means of pardon until death. If its preparation with the water of obedience is cut off from the seed of faith, or, if the heart is remiss, filled with moral delinquencies, and obstinately persists in seeking the pleasures of this world, and then expects pardon, its expectation is stupidity and self-deceit. He (Muhammad) said: The fool is he whose soul follows its passions and who desires of God the Garden. And He (God) said: Then there came after them a succession who have wasted the prayer and followed their lusts; so they shall meet error. (Q. xix, 60) And He said: And there came after them a succession who inherited the Book, who lay hold on the chance gain of this present world and say: It will be forgiven us. (Q. vii, 168). And God condemned the owner of the garden, when he entered his garden and said: I do not think that this will ever perish, nor do I think the Hour is coming; and, if I am indeed taken back to my Lord, I shall surely find a better sphere than this. (Q. xviii, 33-34).

Therefore the creature who strives after obedience and recoils from disobedience is right to expect from the bounty of God the completion of blessing (Q. v, 9) and blessing achieves completion only by the entering into the Garden. As for the disobedient person, when he has repented and repaired all that was remiss through shortcoming, it is proper that he should hope to receive repentance. With regard to the reception of repentance, when he has come to abhor disobedience, when sin grieves him and virtue delights him, when he blames himself and reproves it (evil) and desires repentance and yearns after it, it is proper that he should hope from God the advancement towards repentance because of his repugnance for

disobedience; and his zeal for repentance is conducive to the cause which may give access to repentance.

And hope is only present after the consolidating of the means and for that reason He said: But those who have believed and emigrated and striven in the way of God have hope of the mercy of God. (Q. ii, 215). His meaning is that these have a right to hope for the mercy of God. He did not intend by it that the existence of hope is exclusive to them, since others also may hope, but he has made exclusive to them the right to hope. As for him who obstinately perseveres in what God abhors, and does not upbraid himself because of it, and does not resolve on repentance and return, his hope of pardon is stupidity, like the hope of the person who has sown seed in swampy ground and made up his mind not to cultivate it by leading water to it and cleansing it of weeds.

Yahyā b. Mu‘ādh¹ said: The person who magnifies self-deceit is, in my opinion, the one who prolongs his sins, while he hopes for pardon without repentance and expects to draw near to God without obedience, and expects the crops of the Garden with the seed of the Fire, and seeks after the dwelling-place of obedience with the deeds of disobedience, and expects the reward without the deed, and has wishful thoughts of God in company with remissness.

You hope for salvation and you have not trodden its paths,
But the ship does not progress on dry land.

Since you are acquainted with the essence of hope and its marks, you know that it is a state which knowledge has produced through the setting in motion of the majority of the means, and this state produces zeal to persevere in the remainder of the means in accordance with what is possible. For the man whose seed is fine and whose land is good and who has abundance of water is entitled to his hope, and his legitimate hope will continually urge him towards the oversight of the ground and the cultivation of it and the clearing of all the weeds which grow on it. Thus he will not be remiss in any detail of its cultivation until the time of harvest. This is because hope sets him at the opposite pole from despair, and despair inhibits cultivation. For whoever ‘knows’ that the ground is swampy and that the water will not flow and the seed will not grow, will, doubtless, as a consequence, neglect the oversight of the land and toil in its cultivation.

¹ G. 77. S. 61-2, d. 258/871.

Hope is a commendable thing, because it is a source of incentive, and despair is reprehensible and is the antithesis of hope, because it distracts from work. Fear is not the antithesis of hope, rather it is a companion to it, as its exposition will bring out. More, it is another source of incentive, impelling along the path of awe just as hope impels along the path of inclination. Hence the state of hope produces sustained spiritual combat through actions, and perseverance in obedience, however fickle circumstances may be. Among its effects are finding pleasure in unbroken acceptance with God, contentment in private prayer with Him and fondness for deferring to Him. For these states must be manifest to everyone who hopes, whether king or commoner, and so how will that not be manifest to God? If it is not manifest, that will be a pointer to preclusion from the station of hope and descent into the pit of self-delusion and wishful thinking.

This then is the exposition of the state of hope and how knowledge produces it and how action is produced from it. And a tradition of *Zayd al-Khayl*¹ is a pointer to its producing these actions; when he said to the Messenger of God: I have come to enquire of you about God's way of identifying the person who aspires and the person who does not aspire. So he (Muhammad) said: How do you go about it? He said: I have made a practice of loving virtue and its people, and, whenever I have the capacity for anything belonging to it, I make haste towards it and I believe firmly in its reward. And, when anything belonging to it eludes me, I am grieved thereby and yearn after it. So he said: This is God's identification mark in respect of the one who aspires, and, if He had desired you for other things, He would have prepared you for them; then He would not be concerned in which of their wadies you perished. So he (Muhammad) has mentioned an identification-mark of the person by whom virtue is sought, and, consequently, whoever hopes that there may be the intention of virtue without this mark is self-deluded.

EXPOSITION OF THE MERIT OF HOPE AND THE INCLINATION TOWARDS IT

Know that action on account of hope is of a higher order than action on account of fear, because the creatures who are nearest

¹ I.H., iv, 245 (Guillaume, 637).

to God are those who love Him most, and love dominates hope. This is expressed by two kings, one of whom is served through fear of his punishment and the other through hope of his reward. For this reason what is desiderated, especially at the time of death, has to do with hope and optimism. He (God) said: Do not despair of the mercy of God. (Q. xxxix, 54). Thus He proscribed the root of despair. And (it is recorded) in the traditions about Jacob that God revealed to him saying: Do you know why I parted Joseph from you? ¹ It was because you said: I am afraid that the wolf will eat him, while you are neglectful of him. (cf. Q. xii, 13). Why did you fear the wolf and not hope in me? And why did you have regard to the negligence of his brothers and did not have regard to my preserving him?

And he (Muhammad) said: Truly, not one of you will die, except he has good expectations of God. And he said: God says: I am in accord with what my creature supposes of me, so let him suppose of me what he will. And he came into the presence of a man who was at the point of death and said: How do you find yourself? So he said: I find that I am fearing my sins and hoping for the mercy of my Lord. So he (Muhammad) said: These two were not united in the heart of a creature in this homeland, but God granted him what he hoped and made him secure from what he feared. And 'Ali² said to a man whom fear had brought to despair because of his sins: O you, your despairing of the mercy of God is a greater fault than your sins.

Sufyān³ said: Whoever commits a sin and knows that God has assigned it against him, and (yet) hopes for His pardon, God will pardon him his sin. He continued: For God upbraided a group of people saying: That then, the supposition which you have entertained with respect to your Lord has caused your destruction. (Q. xli, 22). And He said: And you entertained evil suppositions and you were a people of perdition. (Q. xlvi, 12). And he (Muhammad) said: Truly God will say to His creature on the Day of Resurrection: What obstructed you from loathing the hated thing, when you saw it? So, if God has given him a grasp of his defence, he will say: O Lord, I hoped in You and I feared the people. He (Muhammad) said: So, God will say: I have forgiven you it.

¹ Cf. Gen. xxxvii.

² d. 661, H.A. 182.

³ T.T. iv, 111 (199), d. 161/777; T. 190; E. 72 f.

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According to a sound tradition there was a man who was lending money to the people, and he was magnanimous to the rich and overlooked the debts of the destitute, and he met God and had not wrought a single good deed. God said: Who has a better right to that than we have? So He pardoned him because of his optimism and his hope that He would pardon him despite his being destitute of obedience. And He said: Surely those who recite the Book of God and perform the prayer, and give alms in secret and openly of what We have provided them with, hope in a merchandize that will not pass away. (Q. xxxv, 26). And, when he (Muhammad) said: If you knew what I know, then you would laugh but little and would weep much, and would go out to the hills beating your breasts and making entreaty to your Lord, Gabriel swooped down and said: Truly your Lord says to you: Why do you induce despair in My creatures, so that their hope and longing rebel against them?

And according to the tradition God revealed to David: Love Me and love whoever loves Me and commands Me to My creatures. So he said: O Lord, how do I commend You to Your creatures? So He said: Mention Me for My gracious goodness and commemorate My bounties and well-doing and their recollection of that, for they know Me only as One who is gracious.

And Abān b. Abī 'Ayyāsh¹ had a vision in his sleep (he was in the habit of recollecting again and again the categories of hope) and he said: God halted me in front of Him and said: What is it that has spurred you on to this habit? So I said: I desired to commend You to Your creatures. So He said: I have pardoned you. And Yāḥyā b. Akhṭam² was seen in a vision after his death and it was said to him: How did God deal with you? So he said: He halted me in front of Him and said: O Shaykh, you have repeatedly committed evil. He continued: Then trembling took hold of me with respect to what God might know. Then I said: O Lord, this is not the report I had of You. So He said: And what was reported to you about Me? So I said: 'Abd ar-Razzāq³ related to me from Ma'īmar⁴, from az-Zuhri⁵, from Anas⁶, from Your Prophet, from Gabriel, that You said: I am in accord with what my creature

¹ T.T., i, 97 (174), d. 138/755-6.

² T.T., xi, 179 (311), d. 142/759-60.

³ T.T., vi, 310 (608), d. 211/826-7; T. 331.

⁴ T.T., x, 243 (439), d. c. 153/770; T. 178.

⁵ T.T., ix, 445 (732), d. 124/742; T. 102.

⁶ T.T., i, 376 (690), d. c. 93/711; T. 42.

supposes about Me, so let him suppose about Me what he will. So I supposed of You that You would not punish me. God said: Gabriel has spoken the truth, likewise My Prophet and Anas and az-Zuhri and Ma'īmar and 'Abd ar-Razzāq and yourself. He continued: And I was fitted out with clothes and the two attendants walked before me to the Garden and I exclaimed: What joy!¹.

And in the tradition: There was a man of the children of Israel who was inducing despair in men and was being hard on them. So God said to him: The Day of Resurrection will be a day on which I will make you despair of My mercy as you have made My creatures despair of it. And he (Muhammad) said: Truly a man enters the Fire and remains in it one thousand years, calling out: O Gracious One, O Bounteous One. Then God will say to Gabriel: Go and bring my creature to me. He continued: So he brings him and halts him beside his Lord, and God says: How did you find your place? So he says: An evil place. So He says: Take him back to his place. So he walks off and turns round and God says: Why are you turning round? So he says: I had certainly hoped that You would not return me to it, after You had brought me out from it. So God says: Take him to the Garden. And this pointed to his hope being the cause of his salvation. Let us ask for the boon of success through His kindness and favour.

EXPOSITION OF THE THERAPY OF HOPE AND THE WAY IN WHICH THE STATE OF HOPE IS OBTAINED FROM IT AND BECOMES DOMINANT

Know that two types of men have need of this therapy; either the man over whom despair has become dominant, so that he has neglected worship; or the man over whom fear has become dominant, and who has been extravagant in his perseverance in worship, so that he has done injury to himself and his family. And these two examples of men incline away from the equilibrium towards the two extremes of neglect and excess, and so they have need of the treatment which will restore them to the equilibrium.

For the person who is disobedient and self-deceived, who has wishful thoughts of God in company with his evasion of worship and his blind plunging into deeds of disobedience—the therapeutic properties of hope are, in his case, turned into lethal poisons, just

¹ Wright, ii, 53 d.

as is the case with honey which is a cure for the person who is overcome by cold and a lethal poison to the person who is overcome by heat. More, in the case of the self-deluded person, only the therapeutic properties of fear can be employed and the means which excite it, and, for that reason, it is necessary that there should be one to preach to the people; one benevolently disposed who observes the incidence of diseases and treats every disease with its antidote and not with what it has excess of. For what is sought after is the equilibrium, and the goal with respect to all attributes and moral traits, and the optimum state of affairs, is their mean. And, when the mean transgresses upon one of the two extremes, it is treated with what returns it to the mean, not with what would increase its tendency away from the mean.

143 And the present time is one in which it is not expedient that the means of hope should be employed with the most of men. Yet an exaggerated employment of threatening, no less, will hardly return them to the highway of truth and the beaten tracks of rectitude. As for the mention of the means of hope it would cause them to perish and would destroy them totally. But when they (i.e. the means of hope) are less burdensome to the heart and more pleasurable to the appetites, the goal of preaching is no more than to sway hearts (sc. to hope) and make people speak in eulogies, whatever be the reason for their inclining to hope, so that the corrupt increase in corruption and the stubborn in their rebellion through procrastination.

'Ali said: The knowledgeable person is simply he who does not make people despair of the mercy of God and does not make them feel secure from the strategems of God.

And we make mention of the means of hope in order that they may be employed in the case of the despairing man or the one who has been overcome by fear, according to the pattern of the Book of God and the Practice¹ of His Messenger. For both embrace hope and fear in union, since these two unite the means of healing with respect to different kinds of sick people, in order that the Knowledgeable², who are the heirs of the prophets, may employ one or other of them according to need, just as the discriminating physi-

¹ Translating *sunna*.

² 'ulamā'. I have avoided the translation *Scholars* here, because al-Ghazālī is very critical of the actual performance of the professional scholars, and 'ulamā' here means those who are in fact knowledgeable.

cian would employ them and not the quack who supposes that everything that has therapeutic value will be salutary to every sick person, whatever may be his condition.

The state of hope becomes dominant by means of two things; the one is reflection¹, and the other the reciting of the verses (i.e. of the Qur'ān) and traditions and reports². With respect to reflection man reflects on all that we have mentioned concerning the different kinds of benefits in *The Book of Gratitude*³, until he knows the kindnesses of the blessings of God to His creatures in this world, and the marvels of His wisdom which He has disposed in the constitution of man, so that He has furnished for him in this world all that is necessary to him for the maintenance of existence. For example, the means of sustenance and what is needful to him, such as fingers and nails, and what is adornment to him, such as the arching of the eye-brows and the variegation of the colours of the eyes, and the redness of the lips, and other such things by the loss of which the goal aimed at would not be impaired. Only he would miss thereby the attainment of beauty. Since the Divine Providence has not left His creatures deficient in the instances of these minutiae, so that He was not content for His creatures that accessories and refinements in respect of adornment and necessity should pass them by, how will He take pleasure in driving them to everlasting destruction?

Moreover, when He ran over mankind with the eye of a physician, He knew that the most of men have at their disposal the means of happiness in this world, so that they dislike the translation from this world through death. Even if it were reported that there was never a single instance of a person being chastised after death or that there was no gathering (sc. for Judgement), their distaste would not be non-existent, unless, doubtless, because the means of grace were predominant. The person who wishes for death is simply a rarity, and then he does not wish for it except in a rare circumstance, and an unexpected and unfamiliar contingency.

¹ *i'tibār*. I have also translated *fikr* (a technical Sūfi term) as *reflection*.

² al-Ghazālī employs *khibr* to denote a saying of the Prophet Muhammad. I have translated this *tradition*. *hadīth*, which is also used of a saying of Muhammad, I have also translated *tradition*. *athr*, used of a saying of a Companion or of any other celebrated Muslim, including earlier or contemporary Sūfis, I have translated *report*. On *athr* see J. Robson, *Muslim World*, xli, 1951, p. 24.

³ *Iḥyā'* (1939), iv, p. 78 f.

Since the condition of the most of people in this world is one in which well-being and security prevail, the Practice of God does not find a substitute for them. The probability is that the affair of the next world is likewise, for the Framer of this world and the next is One, and He is forgiving, merciful and kind to His creatures, having compassion on them. So, when due reflection is given to this, the means of hope are strengthened thereby.

And also included in reflection is the scrutiny of the wisdom of the Law and its Practice in respect of this-worldly benefits, and the aspect of mercy to the creatures which is in it, so that one of the gnostics used to consider the verse on incurring a debt in the *Sūra al-Baqra* (Q. ii, 282) as among the most powerful of the means of hope. So it was said to him (i.e. to the gnostic). And what is there of hope in it? So he said: This present world in its entirety is small, and the provision for mankind from it is small, and religion is small separated from His provision. And perceive how God revealed concerning it the longest verse (Q. ii, 282), that He might guide His creature in the way of being encompassed in the keeping of his religion. And how will his religion not keep him who will not give anything in exchange for it?

The second kind is the reciting of the verses and the traditions, and the material which has to do with hope is beyond definition. With regard to the verses, He said: Say: O my creatures who have been profligate against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of God; surely God pardons sins altogether; He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate (Q. xxxix, 54). And according to the recitation of the Messenger of God: Then do not fret, surely He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate. And He said: And the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord, and ask pardon for those upon the earth. (Q. xlvi, 3). And He has recorded that He has prepared the Fire for His enemies and has simply frightened His friends with it. So He said to them: Above them are overshadowings from the Fire and below them are overshadowings; by means of that God threatens His servants. (Q. xxxix, 18). And He said: And fear the Fire prepared for unbelievers. (Q. iii, 126). And He said:

144 And I have warned you of a blazing fire; only the most reprobate who has been perfidious and turned renegade will roast in it. (Q. xcii, 14-16). He said: Surely your Lord is forgiving to the people in spite of their wrong-doing. (Q. xiii, 7).

Someone said: Truly the Prophet was making petition without

ceasing for his people, so that it was said to him: Are you not satisfied, although this verse has been revealed to you: Surely your Lord is forgiving to the people in spite of their wrong-doing? And by way of interpreting His saying: Surely your Lord will bestow upon you and you will be satisfied, (Q. xciii, 5) he (the narrator) said: Muhammad will not rest content, while one of his people is in the Fire.

Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. ‘Alī¹ used to say: You people of Iraq are saying: I hope in the verse in the Book of God, namely His saying: Say: O my creatures who have been profligate against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of God—to the end of the verse. And we, the people of the house², say: I hope in the verse in the Book of God, namely His saying: Surely your Lord will bestow upon you and you will be satisfied.

Coming to the traditions, Abū Mūsā³ has related on the authority of the Prophet that he said: My people are a people to whom mercy has been shown; they will not suffer chastisement in the next world; God has brought forward their chastisement to this world, earthquakes and factions. And, when the resurrection comes round, He will toss to every man of my people a man of the People of the Book⁴ and it will be said: This is your ransom from the Fire. And, in another recension: Every manjack of this people will bring to Gehenna a Jew or Christian, and he (the Muslim) will say: This is my ransom from the Fire, and he (the ransom) will be cast into it. And he (Muhammad) said: Heat is from the expanse of Gehenna and it is an amenity to the believer from the Fire. And it is reported as an interpretation of His saying: Upon the day when God will not degrade the Prophet and those who believe with him, (Q. lxvi, 8) that God revealed to His Prophet: Truly, I am assigning the adjudication of your people to you. He said: No, my Lord, you will deal with them more mercifully than I. So He said: Then I will not degrade you among them. And it is reported on the authority of Anas that the Messenger of God enquired at his Lord concerning the sins of his people and said: O Lord, assign their adjudication to me, so that no one but myself may scrutinize their evil doings. So God revealed to him: They are your people and they are my

¹ T.T., ix, 350 (580), d. 114/732-3; T. 117.

² i.e. the Prophet's family.

³ T.T., v, 362 (625), d.c. 50/670; T. 22.

⁴ i.e. Jew and Christians, as is made clear by the variant form of the tradition.

creatures, and I am more merciful with them than you. I shall not assign their adjudication to other than myself, so that neither you nor anyone else may scrutinize their evil deeds. And he (Muhammad) said: My life is good for you and my death is good for you. My life, because I lay down for you the Practice and frame the Law for you; and my death, because your deeds have been open to me, and whatever I have seen of them that was good, I have praised God for it, and I have asked God to pardon you whatever I have seen of evil.

145 And he (Muhammad) said on a certain day: O generous Pardoner. So Gabriel said: Do you know what the interpretation of *generous Pardoner* is? It is as follows: Surely He has pardoned evil deeds in mercy; in His generosity He has substituted good deeds for them. And the Prophet heard a man saying: O Lord I ask You for the completion of blessing. So he said: Do you know what the completion of blessing is? He said: No. He said: The entrance into the Garden. The Scholars said: God has completed His blessing for us in His approving Islām for us, when He said: I have completed My blessing for you and have approved Islām as your religion. (Q. v, 5).

And according to the tradition: When the creature commits a sin and asks God for pardon, God says to His angels: Observe my creature, he has committed a sin and he knows that he has a Lord who will pardon and take away his sin; I testify to you that I have pardoned him. And according to the tradition: If a creature were to sin so that his sins reached the clouds of the heavens, I would pardon him them in so far as he asked pardon of Me and hoped in Me. And according to the tradition: If My creature were to meet Me with sins the equal of the earth, I would meet him with pardon the equal of the earth. And according to the tradition: Surely the Angel holds the reed-pen aloft for six hours so as not to make a mark against the creature, when he sins; and, if he repents and asks for pardon, he will not record it against him; and, if not, he will record it as an evil deed. And according to another recension: If he performs a good deed after he has recorded it against him, the Angel of the right hand says to the Angel of the left ¹ (for the former has command over the latter): Cast away the evil deed (so that one multiple of ten is cast away from his good deed) and credit to him nine good deeds. So the evil deed is cast away from him.

And Anas reported in a tradition that the Prophet said: When

¹ Cf. Q. lxxxii, 10-12.

the creature commits a sin, it is recorded against him. So a nomadic Arab said: And, if he repents of it? He said: It is erased from him. He said: If he returns to sin? The Prophet said: It is recorded against him. The nomad said: And, if he repents? He said: It is blotted out from his page. He said: For how long? He said: For as long as he begs for pardon and repents towards God. Surely God does not grow weary in pardoning until the creature grows weary of begging for pardon. And, when the creature purposed a good deed, the Master of the right hand writes it down as a good deed before he performs it; and, if he performs it, he records ten good deeds. Then God multiplies it to seven hundred multiples. And, when he meditates a sin, it is not recorded against him; and, when he performs it, one sin is recorded, and beyond it is the goodness of God's act of pardon.

146 And a man came to the Prophet and said: O Messenger of God, I do not keep any fast except the month of Ramadān without supererogation, and I pray only the five prayers without supererogation, and I give no voluntary alms in respect of my wealth, and there is neither pilgrimage nor obedience beyond what is obligatory ¹ to my credit. Where am I when I die? So the Messenger of God smiled and said: Yes, you are with me; because you have kept your heart from two things, rancour and envy, and your tongue from two things, slander and falsehood, and your eyes from two things, looking at what God has forbidden and contemning a Muslim with them, you will enter the Garden with me, because of my rejoicing at these two things.

And in a lengthy tradition ascribed to Anas (it is reported) that the (above-mentioned) nomad said: O Messenger of God, who will preside over the adjudication of the people? So he said: God. He said: In Person? He said: Yes. So the nomad smiled and he (Muhammad) said: Why did you laugh? So he said: Surely, when the Magnanimous One decrees (punishment) He pardons, and, when He fixes the reckoning, He forgives. So the Prophet said: The nomad has spoken the truth. Assuredly there is no one more magnanimous than God; He is without peer among those who are magnanimous. Then he (Anas) said: The nomad grasped it. And again in it ² (the Prophet said): Truly God has ennobled the Ka'ba and made it great, and, if a creature should demolish it stone

¹ *taṭawwūf*, see Lane, *in loc.*

² i.e. the lengthy tradition ascribed to Anas.

upon stone, then should set it ablaze, he has not reached the sin of the person who makes sport of one of the friends of God. The nomad said: Who are the friends of God? He said: The believers are all friends of God. Have you not heard the saying of God: God is a friend of those who believe, bringing them out of the shadow into light? (Q. ii, 258).

And according to certain traditions: The believer is preferred more than the Ka'ba. Also: The believer is good and pure. Also: The believer is preferred more than the angels in the sight of God. And according to the tradition: God created Gehenna out of the excess of His mercy as a whip. With it God drives His creatures to the Garden. And in another tradition: God says: I have created men solely that they might exploit me and I have not created them to exploit them. And according to a tradition of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī¹ on the authority of the Messenger of God: God has not created anything but He has matched it with what dominates it, and He has made His mercy to dominate His wrath. And according to the celebrated² tradition: Truly God inscribed mercy on His Self before He created men; truly, My mercy dominates My anger.

And on the authority of Mu'ādh b. Jabal³ and Anas b. Mālik it is reported that he (Muhammad) said: Whoever says: There is no god but God will enter the Garden, and the Fire will not touch him whose last words are: There is no god but God. And, if a man encounters God not having associated anything with Him, the Fire is denied access to him. And the person in whose heart is the weight of an atom of faith will not enter it (the Fire). And according to another tradition: If the unbeliever knew the spaciousness of the mercy of God, not a single one would despair of His Garden. And, when the Messenger of God recited His saying: Surely the earthquake of the Hour is a mighty thing (Q. xxii, 1), he said: Do you know which day this is? This is the day on which it will be said to Adam: Arise and despatch the detachment destined for the Fire from among your seed. So he will say: How many? And it will be said: Out of every thousand nine hundred and ninety nine are for the Fire and one for the Garden. He (the narrator) went on: So he made the people despair and they began to weep and while away

¹ T.T., iii, 479 (894), d. c. 65/684; T. 41.

² *mashhūr* According to A. Guillaume (*The Traditions of Islam*, 1924, p. 181) a tradition vouched for by more than two Companions.

³ T.T., x, 186 (347), d. 17/638-9; T. 18.

their days in idleness and inactivity, and so the messenger of God attacked them and said: What is the matter with you that you will not work? They said: And who would occupy themselves with work after what you have related to us on that point? And he said: How many are you among the nations? Where are Tāwil and Thārīth and Mansak and Gog and Magog¹, nations whom only God can count? Among the rest of the nations you are but as the white hair in the coat of the black bull or the white mark in the fore-leg of the riding-beast.

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So observe how he was driving the people with the whip of fear and leading them with the reins of hope to God. He drove them with the whip of fear at first, and, when that brought them beyond the point of equilibrium to the extreme of despair, he cured them with the therapy of hope and returned them to the equilibrium and the goal. And the latter did not contradict the former, but he made mention in the former of what he considered to be a cause of healing and confined himself to that. And, when they were in need of treatment with hope, he mentioned what completed the matter. And it is the responsibility of the preacher to imitate the Master of Preachers and to be humane in his employment of the traditions of fear and hope in accordance with need, after taking note of the inward defects. And, if he does not take care with that, his preaching will promote more disease than it will health.

And according to the tradition: If you had not sinned, God would have created a people who would and would have pardoned them. And in another recension: He would have dismissed you and produced another creation of sinners and have pardoned them. Surely, He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate. And according to the tradition: If you had not sinned, I would have feared of you what is more evil than sins. It was said: And what is that? He (Muhammad) said: Pride. And he (Muhammad) said: By the One in whose hand my soul is, God is more merciful with His creature, the believer, than the tender mother with her offspring. And

¹ For Gog and Magog see Ez. xxxviii-xxxix and Rev. xx, 8. In Ezekiel Gog is probably to be identified as the king of the Scythians and Magog as the Scythians, but, in the context, as also in the book of Revelation the names are apocalyptic symbols. The other three names which occur here, Tāwil, Thārīth, and Mansak, I have not been able to identify with certainty. I would suggest, however, that the solution may be in Gen. x, 2 where Magog is one of the sons of Japheth. Among the other sons are Tūbāt which Tāwil may be a corruption; Similarly Meshek = Mansak and Thārīth = Tirās.

according to the tradition: Assuredly God will pardon on the Day of Resurrection with a pardon that has not occurred to a single heart, so that even the Devil will strain towards it in the hope that it may impinge on him.

And according to the tradition: Truly God possesses a hundred mercies; of these He has stored up ninety nine beside Himself and has revealed one mercy in this present world. By virtue of it men show compassion to each other and the mother is compassionate to her child, and the beast is humane with its offspring. And, when the Day of Resurrection comes, He will join this mercy to the ninety nine; then He will spread them out upon all His creation and every single mercy is the match of the heavens and the earth, and only the child of perdition will perish at the hand of God at that time. And according to the tradition: There is not a single person among you whose work will give him entrance to the Garden or will save him from the Fire. They said: Not you either, O Messenger of God? He said: Not me either except that God should cover me with His mercy. And he said: Labour and be of good courage, and know that no man's works will save him.

And he (Muhammad) said: I have reserved my intercession for the great sinners among my people. Do you think it is for the submissive and the pious? No, it is for the warped and the dissolute. 149 And he said: I am sent with the true religion which is both accommodating and conciliatory. And he said: I desire that the People of the two Books should know that in our religion there is accommodation. And a pointer to the meaning of this is the reply which God gave to the believers when they said: And lay not upon us a burden. (Q. ii, 286). And He said: And He relieves them of their burdens and shackles which were upon them. (Q. vii, 156). And Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafiya ¹ related on the authority of 'Ali that he said: When He sent down His saying: Be magnanimous on a handsome scale, (Q. xv, 85) he (Muhammad) said: O Gabriel, and what is a handsome magnanimity? He (Gabriel) said: When you have pardoned whoever has wronged you and do not upbraid him. So he (Muhammad) said: O Gabriel, God is too magnanimous to upbraid the one whom He has forgiven. So Gabriel wept and the Prophet wept, and God sent Michael to them both and he said: Truly, your Lord sends both of you His compliments and says: How would I upbraid the one whom I have pardoned? This would

¹ T.T., ix, 354 (586), d. 80/699; I.S., v, 66 f.

not be like My magnanimity. And the traditions which have to do with the means of hope are more than can be numbered.

Coming now to the reports ¹: 'Ali said: If a man commits a sin and God puts a covering over it in this world, He is too magnanimous to withdraw His covering in the next world. If a man commits a sin and is punished for it in this world, God is too equitable to repeat His punishment on His creature in the next world. And ath-Ṯawri ² said: I do not desire that He should assign my adjudication to my parents, because I know that God will deal more mercifully with me than they. And one of the Fathers said: When the believer is disobedient, God covers him from the sight of the angels, that they should not see him and testify against him. And Muḥammad b. Muṣ'ab ³ wrote to Aswad b. Sālim in his own hand: Surely, when the creature is profligate and lifts up his hands praying and saying: O Lord, the angels will screen his voice. And thus the second and the third time, until, when he says the fourth time: O my Lord, God says: How long will you screen from Me the voice of My creature? My creature knows that he has no Lord who will pardon sins but Me. I testify to you that I have pardoned him.

And Ibrāhīm b. Adham ⁴ said: I was performing the circumambulation in solitude on a certain night, and it was a dark rainy night, and I halted at the obligatory place beside the gate and said: O my Lord keep me from sin so that I am never disobedient to You. And the voice of One unseen called out to me from the House ⁵: O Ibrāhīm, you are asking Me to keep you from sin, and all My believing creatures seek that from Me. But, if I should keep them from sin, upon whom should I bestow My bounty and to whom should I grant pardon?

And al-Ḥasan ⁶ used to say: If the believer had not sinned, he would have been flying in the Kingdoms of the Heavens (cf. Q. vi, 75; vii, 184), but God has held him down by his sins. And al-Junayd ⁷ said: If a speck of nobility should be visible, it will annex

¹ p. 11, n. 2.

² Sufyān ath-Ṯawri, p. 7, n. 3.

³ Sa'b in 1939 ed. Muṣ'ab, which is correct, in 1908 ed. T.T., ix, 458 (740), d. 280/893-4.

⁴ T.T., i, 102 (176), d. 160/777; E. 73; S. 36-8.

⁵ i.e. the Ka'ba.

⁶ al-Baṣrī. T.T., ii, 263 (488), d. 110/728; E. 68 f.; S. 33-5; T. 66.

⁷ E. 8 f., 27 f.; S. 55-60; d. 298/910-11.

the evildoers to the well-doers. And Mālik b. Dīnār¹ met Abān² and said to him: For how much longer will you tell the people about the indulgences of God? So he said: O Abū Yahyā, truly, I hope that what you see of God's pardon on the Day of Resurrection will make you rend these your clothes for joy.

And in an account³ of Rabī' b. Ḥarrāsh⁴ concerning his brother who was among the most elect of the Followers, and was one of those who conversed after death. He (Rabī') said: When my brother died, he was wrapped in his shroud and we laid him in his bier. Then he threw back the shroud from his face and sat upright and said: Truly, I encountered my Lord and He greeted me with affability and delight and was anything but angry, and truly, I experienced the affair as something easier than you suppose, so do not flag. And now Muhammad and his Companions are expecting me, so I shall return to them. He (Rabī') went on: Then he prostrated himself, and it was as if a pebble had fallen into a dish, and so we bore him off and buried him.

150 And in the account of two men of the children of Israel who were brothers in God, and one of them was profligate and the other a devotee. And the latter used to warn the former and chide him, and so the other would say: Leave me alone. By my Lord, are you delegated to me as a watchman? This went on until he saw him on a certain day in the act of committing a great sin and was angry and said: God will not pardon you. So God will say (to the profligate) on the Day of Resurrection: Is anyone able to debar My mercy from My creatures? Go your way, for I have pardoned you. Then He will say to the devotee: As for you—the Fire is decreed for you. He (the narrator) said: By the One in whose hand my soul is, He has spoken a word which has destroyed his present world and his next world.

And it is also reported that a certain robber was pillaging the highway among the children of Israel for forty years, and Jesus passed by him, and, in his wake, one of the devotees of the children of Israel, numbered among the disciples. So the robber said to himself: The prophet of God is passing and his disciple is accompanying him; if I were to go down, I would be a third with the

¹ T.T., x, 14 (15), d. 130/747; E. 69 f.

² See p. 8, n. 1.

³ Here *hadīth* is equivalent to *athr*. cf. p. 11, n. 2.

⁴ T.T., iii, 236 (458), d. c. 100/718; T. 65.

two of them. So he went down and was moved with the desire to draw near to the disciple, and he demeaned himself and magnified the disciple, saying to himself: One like myself may not walk at the side of this devotee. And the disciple sensed his presence and said to himself: This man is walking at my side. So he braced himself and made up to Jesus and walked at his side, while the robber remained behind him. So God revealed to Jesus: Say to them both: Assuredly the works of both of you are under review, and I have annulled whatever proceeded from your respective works. I have annulled the good works of the disciple because of his pride in himself, and I have annulled the evil works of the other, according to the measure of his disparagement of himself. So tell these tidings to both of them. And the robber joined himself to him (i.e. Jesus) in his itinerary and he made him one of his disciples.

And it is related on the authority of Māsrūq¹ that one of the prophets was prostrating himself and an apostate trod on his neck, so that the pebbles adhered to his forehead. So the prophet raised his head in rage and said: Be off with you and God will certainly not pardon you. So God revealed to him: You are taking My name in vain in respect of My creatures. Surely I have pardoned him. And what is related on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās² approximates to this. That the Messenger of God was inducing despair in the polytheists and was cursing them in his prayer, and His saying was revealed to him: You have no business with the affair—to the end of the verse. (Q. iii, 123). So he desisted from the prayer in which he was imprecating them, and God guided the body of those people to Islām.

And it is related in the report that there were two devotees equal in devotion. When they entered the Garden, one of them was elevated to the Highest Degrees over his companion. So he said: O Lord in what way did this man exceed me in devotion on the earth? Yet, You have elevated him over me in the Highest Heaven. So God says: Truly, while he was on the earth, he was continually asking for the Highest Degrees, while you were asking for salvation from the Fire. So I have given every creature his request. And this is a pointer to the fact that worship which is on account of hope is the more meritorious, because love dominates the person

¹ T.T., x, 109 (205), d. 63/682-3; T. 46.

² T.T., v, 276 (474), d. c. 68/687-8; T. 37.

who hopes more than it does the one who fears. And what a distinction is made by kings between the person who serves through fear of their punishment, and the one who serves out of the hope of their favours and magnanimity! On that account God has enjoined optimism, and for that reason he (Muhammad) said: Ask God for the Highest Degrees, for you are asking One who is magnanimous. And he said: When you ask God set the target high and ask for the Highest Paradise, for God will not think anything too great for him who asks.

151 And Bakr b. Salim as-Şawwāf¹ said: We came into the presence of Mālik b. Anas² on the evening on which he was taken away by death, and we said: O Abū 'Abdallah, how are you? He said: I do not know what to say to you, except that you will find help from the pardon of God in what was not yours by desert. Then we did not stir until we had closed his eyes. (i.e. in death). And Yahyā b. Mu'ādh said in his supplication: My hoping in You along with my sins all but overcomes my hoping in You along with my good works, because, with respect to works, I rely on single-mindedness, and how shall I preserve it, since I am known to be with blemish? And I find myself with respect to my sins relying on Your pardon, and how will You not pardon them, since magnanimity is Your attribute?

And it is said: A Zoroastrian asked hospitality from Abraham, the Friend (sc. of God); so he said: If you become a Muslim, I will give you hospitality. So the Zoroastrian passed on, and God revealed to him (Abraham): You would not give him food except with his religion changed, and We have fed him for seventy years, notwithstanding his unbelief. If you had given him hospitality for a night, what responsibility would have fallen on you? So Abraham set off running after the Zoroastrian and brought him back and gave him hospitality. So the Zoroastrian said to him: By what means did it become plain to you? So he mentioned it to him. And the Zoroastrian said to him: Does He deal with me thus? Exhibit Islām to me that I may become a Muslim³.

And the Spiritual Director⁴ Abū Sahl as-Şu'lūkī⁵ saw Abū Sahl az-Zajjājī in a dream and he was speaking about the threat

¹ T.T., i, 483 (887).

² T.T., x, 5 (3), d. 179/795.

³ Cf. Acts viii, 34 f.

⁴ *ustādh*, see L.H.A., 392.

⁵ K. 272.

of everlasting punishment. So he (as-Şu'lūkī) said to him: How do you feel? He said: I find the affair easier than I had contemplated. And a certain individual saw Abū Sahl as-Şu'lūkī in a dream, indescribably fair in appearance. So he said to him: O Spiritual Director, by what means did you obtain this? So he said: Through supposing the best of my Lord. And it is related that Abū 'l-'Abbās b. Sarij saw in a dream in his mortal illness as if the Resurrection were actualized and behold! the Almighty was saying: Where are the Scholars? So they came. Then He said: What have you accomplished with what you knew? ¹ He (Abū 'l-'Abbās b. Sarij) went on: So we said: O Lord we have come short and we have done evil. So He repeated the interrogation as if He were not satisfied with the answer and He desired another answer. So I said: As for me, there is no polytheism on my page, and You have promised that You will pardon whatever does not partake of it. And He said: Take him away, for I have pardoned you (all). And he died three nights later.

And it is said: There was a certain tippler who gathered together a party of his cronies and tossed to his boy four dirhams and bade him buy some fruit for his party. And the boy passed by the door of the sitting-room of Manṣūr b. 'Ammār², while he was begging something for a poor man and saying: Whoever tosses him four dirhams, I shall offer four petitions for him. So the boy tossed the dirhams to him and Manṣūr said: What is it you desire that I should ask for you? So he said: I have a master from whom I desire to be released. So Manṣūr prayed. Then he said: Next request. That God would replace my dirhams. So he prayed and then said: Next. He said: That God would bring my master to repentance. So he prayed; then he said: Next. He said: That God would pardon me and my master and you and the multitude. So Manṣūr prayed and the boy returned and his master said to him: What detained you? So he told the tale to him. He said: And what did he pray about? So he said: I asked freedom for myself. So he said to him: Go your way, for you are a free man. He said: And what was the second prayer? He said: That God would replace the dirhams. He said: You possess four thousand dirhams. And what was the third prayer? He said: That God would bring you to repentance. He said: I have repented towards God. He

¹ Cf. p. 10, n. 2.

² K. 126-7.

said: And what was the fourth prayer? He said: That God would pardon me and you and the multitude, and him who spoke the prayer. He said: This one is not in my power. So, while he was passing that night, he had a vision in sleep, as if someone were speaking to him: You have done what was in your power, do you then think that I shall not do what is in My power? I have pardoned you and the boy and Maṣṣūr b. 'Ammār and the crowd which was present, all of them.

And it is related on the authority of 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd ath-Thaqafī¹ who said: I saw three men and a woman bearing a bier. So I took the place of the woman and we went off to the cemetery, and we prayed over the corpse and buried it. So I said to the woman: What was the relationship of the deceased man to you? She said: My son. I said: And did you not have any neighbours? She said: Yes, but they despised his condition. I said: And what was it? She said: He was a *mukhannith*². So I had compassion on her and brought her to my house and gave her money and corn and clothes. That night I had a vision. It was as if someone came to me like to the moon on the night when it is full, wearing white robes. And he began to thank me and I said: Who are you? So he said: The *mukhannith* whom you buried to-day. My Lord had compassion on me for that the people contemned me.

And Ibrāhīm al-Utrūsh said: We were sitting in Baghdad with Ma'rūf al-Karkhī³ by the Tigris, when youths passed by in skiffs, beating with the oars and drinking and jesting. So they said to Ma'rūf: Do you not see them disobeying God with obscene jests? Pray to God against them. So he lifted up his hands and said: O God, as you have given them joy in this world, give them joy in the next world. So the group said: All we asked of you was to pray against them. So he said: If He brings them joy in the next world, He will have forgiven them. And one of the Fathers used to say in his petitions: O Lord, what people was there ever that did not disobey You? Yet Your favour was bounteous upon them and Your provision lavish. Praise be to You, how clement You are!⁴ By Your Might! if disobedience is shown to You, You bestow

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¹ T.T., vi, 449 (934), d. 194/809-10; T. 294. *Hamīd* which appears in both the 1908 and 1939 editions is apparently a mistake for *Majīd*.

² A *mukhannith* is a male who dances so as to simulate a female.

³ L.H.A., 385-6, d. 200/815; E. 17.

⁴ Wright, i, 184 b.

favour in plenty and are lavish with provision, so that it is as if, O our Lord; You were not angry.

These are the means by which the relief of hope is induced in the hearts of the fearful and despairing. And, as for the foolish and self-deluded, it is not expedient that they should hear anything of that; no, they are to hear what we shall cite of the means of fear. For the most of people are not made healthy except through fear, just as the bad servant and the naughty boy are not reformed except through the whip and the stick and speech with an explicit threat. But the opposite of that would block up against them the door of health with respect to religion and this world.

THE SECOND PART OF THE BOOK CONCERNING FEAR

And in it is the exposition of the essence of fear, and an exposition of its degrees, and an exposition of the divisions of the objects of fear; and an exposition of the merit of fear, and an exposition of whether fear or hope is the optimum, and an exposition of the therapy of fear, and an exposition of the meaning of the evil of the Seal; and an exposition of the states of those among the prophets and the sound in faith who feared. And let us ask God for good success.

THE EXPOSITION OF THE ESSENCE OF FEAR

Know that fear is an expression for the suffering of the heart and its conflagration by means of the anticipation of what is abhorred as a future contingency. And this has been made clear in the exposition of the essence of hope. And whoever is intimate with God, whose heart is ruled by truth and who lives in the present through his seeing the majesty of truth perpetually, no longer turns to the future and is possessed of neither fear nor hope. More, his state has become higher than fear or hope, for both of these are reins which preclude the soul from its excursions into laxness. al-Wāṣīṭī¹ has pointed to this in saying: Fear is a veil between God and the creature. Again he said: When the truth makes plain the things which are secret, there remains in them no residue for hope and fear.

And, in general, if the heart of the lover is distracted by fear of separation, while he is viewing his beloved, that would indicate a

¹ S. 64, d. 331/942.

deficiency of vision, and the goal of the stations is simply constancy of vision. But, for the present, we are to discuss only the initial stations and so we shall say: The state of fear can also be classified in terms of knowledge, state and action. With regard to knowledge, it is knowledge of the cause which leads to the thing which is abhorred. So that it is as if someone committed a crime against a king, then fell into his hands and feared that he would be put to death as an example, while pardon and escape were possibilities. But the suffering of his heart through fear is in proportion to the strength of his knowledge of the means which would lead to his being put to death, such as the enormity of his crime and the fact that the king in himself is rancorous, wrathful and revengeful, that he is surrounded by such as incite him to take vengeance and is isolated from such as would intercede with him in his case. And this man in his fear was destitute of any merit or virtue that might wipe out the trace of his crime with the king. Hence the knowledge that these means are manifest is a cause of the strength of the fear and the rigour of the suffering of the heart.

And fear is faint in proportion to the weakness of those means. And it may be that fear does not derive from the crime which the person who fears has committed, but is because of the nature of the object feared. As, for example, the person who falls into the claws of the lion, for he fears the lion because of the nature of the lion itself, namely, that, for the most part, it is avid and violent in pouncing on its prey. Even if its pouncing on its prey were within the province of choice, it might seem to the person threatened by it to be due to inborn disposition. Similarly the person who falls into the path of a torrent or into a blazing pit, for he fears the water because it is endowed by nature with the power of flowing and drowning, and likewise fire is endowed with burning. And the knowledge of the means of the thing which is abhorred is the cause which initiates and fans the conflagration and suffering of the heart, and that conflagration is fear. And, similarly, fear of God may sometimes be due to 'knowledge' of God and His attributes, that, if He destroyed the worlds, He would not care and no person would obstruct Him. And sometimes it may be due to the multitude of the sins of the creature through his committing deeds of disobedience; and sometimes it may be due to both of them together. And the strength of his fear will be in proportion to his 'knowledge' of his own defects and his 'knowledge' of the majesty of

God and His self-subsistence, and that He will not be asked about what He does, while they will be asked. And the person most filled with fear in respect of His Lord is the man who has most 'knowledge' of himself and his Lord. For that reason he (Muhammad) said: I am the one who fears God most among you. And likewise God said: Only the knowledgeable among his creatures fear God. (Q. xxxv, 25).

Then, when 'knowledge' is perfected, the majesty of fear and the conflagration of the heart are produced. Then the trace of the conflagration flows from the heart into the body and the members and the attributes. In the body by means of emaciation and pallidness and fainting and shrieking and weeping, and it may be that in this way bitterness is inhaled and it leads to death; or it goes up to the brain and rots the intelligence; or it intensifies in strength and produces despair and hopelessness. In the members by restraining them from disobedience and binding them to deeds of obedience; by repairing what is defective and making ready for the future. And for that reason it is said: The man who fears is not he who weeps and wipes his eyes; no, it is he who forsakes that on whose account he fears punishment. And Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Ḥakīm¹ said: Whoever fears anything flees from it, and whoever fears God flees to Him. And it was said to Dhū 'l-Nūn²: When is the creature a person who fears? He said: When he has brought himself down to the level of the sick man who is abstemious for fear that his sickness may be prolonged. In the attributes by stifling the lusts and blackening the pleasures, so that the disobediences beloved by him become abhorrent, just as honey becomes abhorrent to the man who desires it, when he 'knows' that there is poison in 't. So the lusts are burned up by fear and the members are trained, and self-abasement and humility and submissiveness and lowness obtain in the heart, and pride, rancour and envy abandon it.

Moreover he is absorbed with concern through his fear and his observing the peril of its sequel, and has no leisure for other than it. And he has no preoccupation but vigilance and self-examination and spiritual combat and conserving breaths and glances³ and repreending the soul for the suggestions and footsteps⁴ and

¹ G. 63, d. 513/1119-20.

² E. 80 f.; S. 52-4, d. 246/861.

³ *Iḥyā* (1939), iv, 380 f.

⁴ Cf. Q. ii, 163, 204; vi, 143; xxiv, 21.

words (sc. of Satan). And his condition is that of the man who falls into the claws of a harmful lion, and he does not know whether it will ignore him and he will escape, or it will pounce on him and he will perish. So he will be engrossed outwardly and inwardly with what he fears and there will be no room in him for anything else. This is the state of the person over whom fear has prevailed and gained the mastery. The state of the company of the Companions and Followers was thus. And the strength of vigilance and self-examination and spiritual combat is in proportion to the strength of fear which is the suffering of the heart and its conflagration. And the strength of fear is in proportion to the strength of 'knowledge' of the majesty of God and His attributes and His actions, and in proportion to the defects of the soul and the perils and terrors which confront it.

And the least of the degrees of fear whose trace is visible in actions is the blocking of access to the forbidden; and the restraint which excludes the forbidden is called abstinence. If its strength increases, it restrains from what directs at it the possibility of the forbidden, and hence also from that whose forbiddenness is not a matter of certainty, and that is called piety, since piety is the forsaking of that which one suspects so as to arrive at what one does not suspect. And it may urge a man on to forsake what has no evil in it for fear of what has evil in it, and this is sincere piety. When fully consecrated worship is joined to it, the consequence is that one does not build what he does not inhabit nor gather what he does not eat, nor turn to this world, since he knows that it will abandon him, nor expend a single breath except towards God.

This is sincerity and its owner is worthy to be named *Sincere*. And piety enters into sincerity and abstinence into piety and chastity into abstinence, for it (chastity) is a specialized expression for being cut off from the determinism of lusts. Therefore fear is effective in the members through restraint and perseverance, and it is in virtue of restraint that it is given the new name of chastity which is refraining from the determinism of lusts. And abstinence is higher than it, since it is more universal, because it is refraining from everything forbidden. And higher than it is piety, since it is the name for refraining from the sum of things forbidden and dubious. And beyond it is the name *Sincere* and *He who is brought near*. And the course of the most ultimate rank in relation to what precedes it is from the most general to the most particular, for,

when you have mentioned the most particular, you have mentioned the whole. As if you were saying: Mankind, whether Arab or non-Arab, and Arab, whether Quraysh or non-Quraysh, and Quraysh, whether Hashimi or non-Hashimi, and Hashimi, whether Alid or non-Alid, and Alid, whether Hasani or Husayni; and, when you have mentioned, for example, that a man is Hasani, you have described him totally, and, if you describe him as Alid, you describe him by what is above him—what is more general than he. Similarly when I have said *sincere*, I have said that a man is pious, is abstemious and is chaste. And there is no need for you to suppose that these numerous names point to numerous dissimilar meanings, for that would reduce you to confusion, just as confusion reigns over whoever seeks (different) meanings from linguistic variants, where the meanings have not followed the variants. So this is a pointer to the concert of the meanings of fear, and what surrounds it on the higher side, such as the 'knowledge' which determines it, and on the lower side, such as the actions which derive from it through restraint and perseverance.

EXPOSITION OF THE DEGREES OF FEAR AND ITS DIFFERENTIATION 154 INTO POWER AND WEAKNESS

Know that fear is commendable. Often it is supposed that all fear is commendable, and that the more powerful and frequent it is the more it is commendable. This is a fallacy. No, fear is the whip of God by which He drives His creatures towards perseverance in knowledge and action, so that by means of both of these they may obtain the rank of nearness to God. And what is most salutary for the beast is that it should not escape the whip, and thus with the boy, but that does not point to the conclusion that excessive beating is commendable. And likewise with fear; it has deficiency and equilibrium, and what is commendable is the equilibrium and the mean.

The person who is deficient in it is he who tends towards effeminate softness which alights on his mind, whenever he hears a verse from the Qur'ān, and produces weeping, and the tears overflow; and similarly when he sees a cause of terror. And, when that cause is absent from his attention, his heart returns to negligence. So this is a fear which is deficient, of little profit and feeble in utility; just like the slight stick with which the powerful riding-beast is

beaten, which gives it no serious pain and does not urge it on to the destination, nor is it salutary for its correction. Such is the fear of all men except the Gnostics and the Knowledgeable. And I do not mean by Knowledgeable ('*ulamā*') those who are stamped with the marks of Scholars or are called by their names¹, for they, of all men, are the most distant from fear. No, I mean those who are knowledgeable concerning God and His Days and His actions, and that is a thing whose existence is rare at the present time. And, for that reason, al-Fudayl b. 'Iyād² said: When it is said to you: Do you fear God?, keep silence. For, if you say: No, you are an unbeliever; and, if you say: Yes, you are a liar. And he indicated by this that it is fear that restrains the members from deeds of disobedience and binds them to deeds of obedience, and whatever does not take effect in the members is no more than an impulse³ and a fleeting motion which does not deserve the name of fear.

The extremist is he whose fear is strong and transgresses the limit of the equilibrium, so that it goes out towards hopelessness and despair, and it again is reprehensible, because it stultifies action. Fear may also issue in sickness and weakness and depression and bewilderment and intellectual atrophy. The aim of fear is the same as the aim of the whip which is to incite to action. If it is otherwise, fear is imperfect, because it is deficient in its essence, since its product is ignorance and impotence. Ignorance, because one does not know the sequel of his affair; and, if he 'knew' he would not be afraid, since the thing which is feared is that about which there is doubt. Impotence, because he is exposed to a forbidden thing which he is unable to repel. Therefore it (fear) is commendable in connection with human deficiencies, and only knowledge is commendable in itself and its essence, together with power and everything by which it is possible to describe God. And that by which it is not possible to describe God is not perfect in its essence and only becomes commendable in connection with a deficiency which is greater than it; just as the enduring of therapeutic pain is commendable, because it is milder than the pain of disease and death. And whatever issues in despair is reprehensible, and fear also may issue in disease, weakness, depression and

¹ i.e. in using '*ulamā*' he is not referring to the class of Scholars who bear that name. cf. p. 10, n. 2.

² T.T., viii, 294 (538), d. 187/803; T. 225; E. 74; S. 41-2.

³ *hadilhu'l nafsi*.

bewilderment and intellectual atrophy; it may even issue in death. All that is reprehensible and is to be likened to the beating which kills the boy and the whip which slays the riding-beast or makes it ill or breaks one of its limbs.

The Messenger of God mentioned the means of hope and multiplied them simply in order that he might thereby treat the shock of excessive fear which leads to despair or one of these conditions, and all that is implied with respect to a condition. The commendable part of it is whatever leads to the goal which is intended by it, and whatever comes short of it or goes beyond it is reprehensible. The profit of fear is caution and abstinence and piety and spiritual combat and worship and reflection¹ and recollection, and all the means that bring about union with God. And all of that requires life along with health of body and wholeness of intellect, and whatever impairs these means is reprehensible.

If you say: Whoever fears and dies because of his fear is a martyr, and how can his state be reprehensible? Know that the meaning of his being a martyr is that he possesses a rank in virtue of his death through fear which he would not have attained had he died at that time through a cause other than fear. So that in connection with him it is meritorious, but in connection with the ordering of his survival and the prolongation of his life in obedience to God and the treading of His paths it is not meritorious. No, the person who is making a pilgrimage to God by the path of reflection¹ and spiritual combat and the ascent of the degrees of 'knowledge' possesses at every instant the rank of martyr and martyrs. Were it otherwise the rank of a lad who is killed or the madman whom a lion mauls would be higher than the rank of a prophet or saint who dies a natural death, and this would be absurd. Nor is it proper that this should be supposed. No, the most valued of blessings is prolongation of life in obedience to God, and everything which annuls life or mind or health (for life is impaired when it is impaired) is a loss and deprivation in relation to some conditions, even if some parts of it should have merit in relation to other conditions. Just as martyrdom has merit in relation to what is below it, not in relation to the degree of the *Pious* and the *Sincere*.

So, if fear does not effect action, its existence and non-existence are alike, just as the whip which does not accelerate the movement of the riding-beast. And, if it is effective, it has degrees according

¹ Translating *fikr*. cf. p. 11, n. 1.

as its effects are visible. For, if it is an incentive only to chastity, it is the refraining from the determinism of lusts, so that it possesses a degree. And, if it produces abstinence, it is higher (in degree). And the most ultimate of its degrees is that it should produce the degrees of the *Sincere*, which is that it should tear one away outwardly and inwardly from what is other than God, so that there remains in him no room for other than God, and this is the most ultimate of its commendable characteristics, and it is accompanied with preservation of health and mind. If it goes beyond this towards the atrophy of mind and health, it is sickness which must be treated, if there is an effectual treatment. And, if it were commendable, its treatment by hope and other means until it passes away would not be necessary. For this reason Sahl¹ used to say to novices who persisted with fasting over a long period: Keep your wits. God has never had a saint who was mentally deficient.

EXPOSITION OF THE DIVISIONS OF FEAR IN RELATION
TO THE OBJECT WHICH IS FEARED

Know that fear does not deserve the name except it concerns the expectation of what is abhorred, whether it is abhorred in its essence, such as fire, or because it leads to what is abhorred, as deeds of disobedience are abhorred, because they lead to what is abhorred in the next world; just as the invalid abhors the fruits which do him injury, because they lead to death. So everyone who fears is bound to picture to himself an abhorred thing from one of the two divisions, and the expectation of it grows powerful in his heart, so that his heart is burnt up through his terror of the abhorred thing.

And the station of those who fear is differentiated in accordance with the kind of abhorred things whose dread dominates their hearts. So there are those whose hearts are dominated by what is not essentially abhorred, but abhorred because of what is outside itself, such as those who are dominated by the fear of death before repentance or a fear of a deficiency of repentance and a breaking of the covenant²; or the fear of a diminishing of strength so as not to fulfil the complete demands of God. Or the fear that the tenderness of the heart will pass away and that it will be replaced by hardness;

¹ G. 183, d. 283/896.

² Cf. Q. vii, 130-1; xlvi, 10.

or the fear of inclining away from uprightness; or the fear of the mastery of custom in the following of the familiar lusts; or the fear that God will entrust a man to his good works in which he has put his trust, and which he has boasted about among God's creatures. Or the fear of taking God for granted by reason of the multitude of God's favours towards him; or the fear of being distracted from God by other than God; or the fear of being deceived by the regular succession of favours. Or the fear that the defections of his obedience will be uncovered, where there is revealed to him from God what he did not take into the reckoning. Or the fear that people will persecute him with back-biting, perfidy, dissimulation and premeditated thoughts of evil. Or the fear of his lack of knowledge of what may happen in the remainder of his life; or the fear of punishment¹ being brought forward to this world and his being disgraced before death. Or the fear of being deceived by the blandishments of this world; or the fear that God will scrutinize his secret heart at a moment when he is heedless of Him. Or the fear of being sealed at death with the Seal of evil; or the fear of the predestination which has been predestined to him from all eternity.

And all these are things which the Gnostics fear and there is that which is particularly advantageous to everyone, which is the treading of the path of caution so as to exclude what leads to the thing feared. And so whoever fears the mastery of custom over him will persevere in weaning himself from custom. And whoever fears that God will scrutinize his secret heart occupies himself with the purifying of his heart from the whisperings (of Satan). And thus with the remainder of the divisions; and among those fears the one which most overcomes assurance is the fear of the Seal, for its affair is full of danger. The highest of all the divisions and the one which gives best access to perfection of 'knowledge' is the fear of predestination, because the Seal follows from what has been predestined, and is a branch which springs from it in accordance with the interaction of many causes. So the Seal makes manifest what the (eternal) decree has predestined in the essence² of the Book.

The relation of him who fears the Seal to him who fears prede-

¹ The reference may be specifically to the punishment ('adlāh) or chastisement of the grave which takes place after the interrogation by Munkar and Nakir, although the word used is 'uqūba.

² or: *prototype; essence* in the sense of verses of the Qur'ān whose meaning is unambiguous is an appropriate translation of *Umm* (literally *Mother*) in Q. iii, 5. Q. xiii, 39, on the other hand, might support *prototype*.

tination is like that of two men in judgement of whom the king has signed a decree, the import of which might be their beheading or the assigning to them of a Ministry. And the decree was not yet delivered to them and the heart of one was tied up with the circumstance of the delivery of the decree and its publication and what it would disclose; and the heart of the other was tied up with the circumstance of the decree of the king, its nature, and what it was that had passed through his mind at the moment of the decree, of mercy or of anger. And this was to turn towards the cause which is a higher activity than to turn towards what is a corollary. And likewise to turn towards the eternal decree in promulgating which the reed-pen flowed is a higher activity than turning towards what is made manifest at the End.

The Prophet pointed to this when he was in the pulpit and clenched his right hand and said: This is the Book of God in which He has written the people of the Garden with their names and the names of their fathers of which there shall be no increase and no diminution. Then he clenched his left hand and said: This is the Book of God in which He has written the people of the Fire with their names and the names of their fathers of which there shall be no increase and no diminution. And let the people of bliss do the works of the people of woe, so that it is said: It is as if they were numbered with them; more, they are identical with them. Then God will save them before death, even if it is in the time between two milkings of she-camel. And let the people of woe do the works of the people of bliss, so that it is said: It is as if they were numbered with them; more, they are identical with them. Then God will extract them before death, even if it is in the time between two milkings of a she-camel. He who is numbered among the blessed is so by the decree of God, as is the reprobate by the decree of God, and works are in the nature of Seals.

And this accords with the division of those who fear into the person who fears his disobedience and sin, and the one who fears God in Person, because of His attributes and majesty and characteristics which, without a doubt, compel awe. So this (fear) is the highest in rank, and, for that reason, his fear endures, even if he enters into the obedience of the *Sincere*. As for the other it is in the target area¹ of self-deception, and the safest part of it is if one perseveres in obedience. So fear of disobedience is the fear of

¹ Reading عرضة (1908) for عرفة (1939).

the Sound in Faith, and the fear of God is that of the Unitarians and the *Sincere*. It is the fruit of 'knowledge' concerning God, and whoever 'knows' Him and 'knows' His attributes, knows from His attributes how He is worthy to be feared apart altogether from sin. More, if the disobedient person 'knew' God as he ought to 'know' Him, he would fear God and would not fear his disobedience. And were it not that He is to be feared in His Person, He would not constrain him to disobedience and smooth its path for him and prepare its means, for the facilitating of the means of disobedience is alienation. And he has not committed disobedience prior to his (present) disobedience in virtue of which he deserves to be constrained to disobedience and to have access to its means. Nor is obedience preceded by merit in virtue of which favour is shown to him for whom obedience is made easy and the path of communion smoothed for him. For the disobedient person has had disobedience decreed to him whether he wills it or not; and thus with the obedient person. And He who exalts Muhammad to the Highest Heaven irrespective of merit which he had acquired prior to its taking place, and abases Abū Jahl¹ in the Lowest Hell irrespective of sin which he had committed prior to its taking place, is worthy to be feared for His attribute of majesty.

For whoever obeys God, obeys because the will to obedience has dominion over him and power comes to him, and, after the creation of the irrevocable will and the complete power, the action comes into being of necessity. And he who is disobedient is so because a powerful and irrevocable will has dominion over him, and the means and power come to him, and the action, in the wake of the will and the power, is of necessity. Would that I knew what it is that determines the preferment of this man and his being singled out through the dominion over him of the will to obedience, and what determines the abasement of that man and his alienation through the dominion over him of the impulses of disobedience, and how this is transferred to the creature! But, since the transfer goes back to the eternal decree, irrespective of sin or merit, fear of One who decrees as He wills and legislates as He desires is a resolution with every intelligent person. And beyond this meaning is the secret of predestination whose dissemination is not permissible.

And the understanding of the fear of Him in respect of His attributes is not possible except by parable. Were it not for the

¹ M.M. 117-9.

permission of the Law, the man of insight would not have dared to mention it. So it has come down in the tradition: Surely God revealed to David: Fear Me as you fear the harmful lion. And this is the parable which lets you understand what is the effect of the meaning, even if it does not acquaint you with its cause. For to be acquainted with its cause is to be acquainted with the secret of predestination, and He does not disclose that except to His 'People'. And the conclusion to be drawn is that the lion is to be feared not because of the sin which you have previously committed against it, but because of its characteristics, its violence and rapaciousness and arrogance and awfulness, and because it does what it will and does not care. For, if it killed you, its heart would be untouched by compunction, and it would feel no pain at killing you. And, if it left you alone, it would not leave you out of pity for you or to preserve your breath. No, you are in its sight too insignificant for it to notice you, whether dead or alive. More, the killing of a thousand like you and the killing of a gnat are on one plane with it, since that does not impugn the animal kingdom or the power and rapaciousness attributed to it. And the parable has its highest application to God. Whoever 'knows' Him 'knows' with inward sight which is more powerful and trustworthy and transparent than outward sight. He speaks the truth in His saying: These to the Garden and I do not care; and these to the Fire and I do not care. And of the things which compel awe and fear 'knowledge' that He is self-subsistent and that He does not care will suffice you.

157 As for the second class of those who fear, the thing abhorred is pictured within them, such as the image of the pangs of death and its rigours, or the interrogation Of Munkar and Nakir¹, or the punishment of the grave, or the terror of the resurrection², or the awfulness of the halting-place before God and shame because of the drawing back of the veil, and the interrogation about the smallest details³; or the fear of the Bridge⁴ and its edge and the

¹ A fuller account of these eschatological events is given by al-Ghazālī in "The Two Words of Witnessing", *Iḥyā'* (1939) i, 97-9. For Munkar and Nakir see also M.C., 129, 164-5, 195, 268.

² or: *ascent*. Translating *maṭla'*.

³ *naqīr* and *qīmīr*. *naqīr* (Q. iv, 56) 'single date-spot' (Arberry). *qīmīr* (Q. xxxv, 14) 'skin of a date stone' (Arberry). I take this to be idiomatic for an interrogation which extends to the smallest detail. See Lane, Dozy and Wehr, *in loc.* It thus probably corresponds to the mention of the Reckoning (*hisāb*) in *Iḥyā'* (1939), i, 98.

⁴ See M.C., 232-3, 268. Also below pp. 94-95.

manner of crossing over it; or the fear of the Fire and its shackles and terrors, or the fear of being banned from the Garden, the House of Bliss and the enduring Kingdom, and from a diminution of degrees¹; or the fear of being veiled from God.

And all these means are abhorred in themselves and are, indubitably, to be feared. And the states of those who fear are differentiated according to them; and the highest of them in rank is the fear of alienation and of being veiled from God and this is the fear of the Gnostics. And what comes before this is the fear of the Practitioners and the Sound in Faith and the Ascetics and the body of the people. He whose 'knowledge' is not perfect and whose inner sight is not opened up does not feel the pleasure of union nor the pain of alienation and separation. When it is mentioned to him that the Gnostic does not fear the Fire but fears only the veil, he finds that inwardly repugnant, and marvels at it in his soul. And it may be that he would find repugnant the pleasure of looking at the face of God, the Magnanimous One, were it not that the Law precludes him from being repugnant to it. And his confessing it with the tongue derives from the compulsion of authority, and, were it otherwise, it would not be inwardly vouchsed for, because he 'knows' only the pleasure of the stomach, of sexual intercourse and of the eye (when he looks at colours and fair faces), and, in general, every pleasure in which the beasts are his associates. As for the pleasure of the Gnostics they only attain to it, and its classification and exposition are forbidden to whoever is not a party to it. And whoever is a party to it himself possesses the insight, and so has no need that someone else should expound it to him. The fear of those who fear can be traced to these divisions. Let us ask God for good success through His magnanimity.

EXPOSITION OF THE MERIT OF FEAR AND THE LIKING FOR IT

Know that the merit of fear is sometimes 'known' by consideration and reflection and sometimes by the verses and the tradition.

¹ This is difficult, but I would suggest that it may represent an abridgement of the statement in *Iḥyā'* (1939), i, 98. This refers to a Reckoning in which individuals will receive differential treatment. "diminution of degrees" means a modified standard of entry to the Garden. The person who is banned from "diminution of degrees" is subject to the full rigours of an exhaustive Reckoning and is not numbered among those to whom compassion is shown.

tions¹. With regard to reflection its procedure is that the merit of anything is in proportion to its adequacy to conduct to the bliss of an encounter with God in the next world, since there is no goal except bliss and there is no bliss for the creature except in meeting His Master and being near to Him. And everything which assists him possesses merit, and its merit is in proportion to its goal. For it has been made plain that there is no passage to the bliss of encountering God in the next world except through the attaining of His love and through intimacy with Him in this world. And love is not obtained except by 'knowledge', and 'knowledge' is not obtained except by constant reflection; and intimacy is not obtained except by love and constant recollection. And perseverance in recollection and reflection are facilitated only when the seed of this present world is cut off from the heart, and it will not be cut off except by the forsaking of the pleasures and the lusts of this world. And the forsaking of things desired is not possible except by the strangling of lusts, and a lust is not strangled by anything as it is by the fire of fear. So fear is the fire which burns up lusts, for its merit is in proportion to the extent to which it burns up lusts and restrains from actions of disobedience and incites to actions of obedience. And that is differentiated according to the different degrees of fear (see above)², and how can such fear be other than meritorious, since by it chastity and abstinence and piety and spiritual combat are obtained, and these are actions both meritorious and commendable which promote nearness to God.

As for the procedure of quoting the verses and the traditions what concerns the merit of fear is beyond the range of definition. It will suffice you as a pointer to its merit that God has united in those who fear guidance and mercy and knowledge³ and satisfaction and these are the concert of the stations of the people of the Gardens. God said: And guidance and mercy to those who reverence their Lord. (Q. vii, 153). And He said: Only the knowledgeable among God's creatures fear Him. (Q. xxxv, 25). He attributed to them knowledge in respect of their fear and said: God was satisfied with them and they with Him. This refers to whoever fears his Lord. (Q. xcvi, 8). And everything which points to the merit of knowledge points to the merit of fear, because fear

¹ See p. 11, n. 2.

² pp. 29-32.

³ 'ilm here, where, in the context, *ma'rifa* might have been expected.

is the fruit of knowledge. For that reason it has come down in a tradition of Moses: As for those who fear they possess the Highest Companion¹. So observe how he has singled them out for the fellowship of the Highest Companion, and that is because they are knowledgeable and the knowledgeable possess the rank of the fellowship of the prophets, because they are the heirs of the prophets, and the fellowship of the Highest Companion belongs to the prophets and whoever overtakes them. And for this reason, when the Messenger of God was given the option during his mortal sickness of remaining in the world or going to God, he said: I ask of You the Highest Companion. 158

Therefore, if one looks to what produces fear, it is knowledge, and if one looks to its product, it is abstinence and piety, and there is no secret about what constitutes their respective merits, so that the sequel is stamped with piety as its special attribute just as praise is the exclusive attribute of God and blessing of the Messenger of God, so that it is said: Praise to God, Lord of the Worlds, and the sequel to the pious², and blessing upon our master Muhammad and all his family. For God has connected piety particularly with Himself, for He said: Their flesh and blood will not inherit God, but piety from you will inherit Him. (Q. xxii, 38). Piety is simply an expression for the restraint which is regulated by fear (see above)³ and so He said: The most preferred of you with God are those who are most god-fearing. (Q. xlvi, 13). For that reason God enjoined piety on those who are first and those who are last, and said: We have charged those who were given the Book before you, and you too show piety to God. (Q. iv, 130). And He said: But fear me, if you are believers. (Q. iii, 169).

So He commanded fear and made it compulsory and a condition of faith. For that reason it cannot be envisaged that a believer will be disjoined from fear, and, if it is weak, the weakness of his fear will be in proportion to the weakness of his 'knowledge' and his faith. And the Messenger of God said concerning the merit of piety: When God musters the first and the last for the appointment of a Day which is fixed, behold! a voice, which those furthest away will hear equally with those nearest, will say: O you people, I have answered your shouts since your creation to this day, so you answer

¹ i.e. God.

² Cf. Q. xi, 51.

³ pp. 29-32.

my call to-day. It is nothing but your deeds which will rebound to you, O you people. Surely, I have made a standard and you have made a standard, and you have depreciated my standard and appreciated your standard. I said: The most preferred of you with God are those who are most god-fearing, (Q. xlvi, 13) and you disdained it except that you say: So and so, son of so and so and so and so, is richer than so and so. Hence to-day I shall depreciate your standard and appreciate my standard. Where are the pious? So He will raise a banner for the people and they will follow their banner to their lodgings and they will enter the Garden irrespective of what is due to them.

And Muḥammad said: The head of wisdom is the fear of God¹. And he said to Ibn Mas'ūd:² If you are desirous of meeting me then multiply fear after me. And al-Fuḍayl said: If a man fears God, fear points him to every good. And *ash-Shiblī*³ said: There is no day that I have feared God, but that I have seen in respect of Him a category of wisdom and admonition which I had never (previously) seen. And Yahyā b. Mu'ādh said: No believer performs an evil deed but two good deeds overtake it, namely, the fear of punishment and the hope of pardon, just like a fox between two lions. And in a tradition of Moses: As for the abstemious, there remains no one except the abstemious but that I make the closest examination of him and scrutinize what is in his hands, for I feel embarrassment on their account (i.e. on account of the abstemious) and have (too much) respect for them that I should halt them for the reckoning.

And abstinence and piety are names derived from meanings which are conditional on fear. If they are divorced from fear, they do not bear those names. And likewise what constitutes the merits of recollection is no secret, and God has made it the special attribute of those who fear. So He said: He that fears will remember, (Q. lxxxvii, 10). And He said: He who fears the station of his Lord will have two Gardens, (Q. iv, 46). And he (Muḥammad) said: God said: By My might, I shall not unite in my creature two fears and two securities, for, if he feels secure in Me in this world, I shall terrify him on the Day of Resurrection. And, if he fears Me in this world, I shall make him secure on the Day of Resurrection. And he also

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¹ Cf. Ps. cxi, 10; Prov. ix, 10.

² T.T., vi, 27 (42), d. 32/652; T. 13.

³ G. 35, 49, 127. d. 334/945-6.

said: If a man fears God, everything fears him; and, if a man fears other than God, God threatens him with everything. And he said: The most consummate of you in intelligence are those whose fear of God is most rigorous, and who are best at perceiving what God has commanded and forbidden.

Yahyā b. Mu'ādh said: If Miskin b. Adam had feared the Fire as he feared poverty, he would have entered the Garden. Dhu 'l-Nūn said: Whoever fears God with his whole heart, his love to God is intense and his most inward part is right with Him. Dhu 'l-Nūn said again: It is fitting that fear should be more dominant than hope, for, when hope is dominant, the heart is disordered. And Abū 'l-Husayn ad-Dīrrīr used to say: The mark of bliss is fear of being a reprobate, because fear is a rein between God and His creature, and, when his rein is severed, he perishes with those who perish. And it was said to Yahyā b. Mu'ādh: Who of God's creatures is most secure for the morrow? He said: Those of them whose fear of to-day is most intense. And Sahl said: You will not experience fear, until you eat what is permitted. And it was said to al-Ḥasan: O Abū Sa'īd, how can we set about sitting down with parties who threaten us, so that our hearts almost fly away with terror? So he said: By God! if you mix with parties who threaten you until security overtakes you, it is better for you than that you should fraternize with parties who make you feel safe until fear overtakes you.

Abū Sulaymān, ad-Dārānī¹ said: Fear has never abandoned any heart but a ruin. And 'A'īsha² said: I said: O Messenger of God: Those who give what they give and their hearts are fearful (Q. xxiii, 62). Does this refer to the man who steals and commits adultery? He said: No, but to the man who fasts and prays (the statutory prayers) and gives supererogatory alms and fears that it may not be accepted of him.

And the extreme dangers which are involved in feeling secure from the strategems of God and His punishment cannot be defined and all that is a eulogy of fear, because the reprehensibleness of a thing is a eulogy of its contradiction which negates it. And the contradiction of fear is security, just as the contradiction of hope is despair. And just as the reprehensibleness of despair is a pointer to the merit of hope, so the reprehensibleness of fancied security is

¹ E. 76 f. d. 215/830.

² T. 26, d. 57/676-7.

a pointer to the merit of fear which is contradictory to it. More, we shall say: All that is involved in the merit of hope is a pointer to the merit of fear, because the two are interdependent. For everyone who hopes for a desired object cannot but fear that he should miss it, for, if he did not fear that he should miss it, he would not be hoping in expectation of it, since he would not be desirous of it. So fear and hope are interdependent and it would be absurd that one should be severed from the other. Certainly it is possible that one should dominate the other, while the two are united, and it is possible for the heart to be occupied with one and to have no regard to the other for the moment, because of its being negligent of it. This is so, because, from the conditional character of hope and fear, their interdependence is with an object of doubt, since whatever is specified is not hoped for nor feared. Therefore the object of desire whose existence is possible its non-existence is also possible—indubitably. Hence the assumption that it exists refreshes the heart and that is hope, and the assumption that it does not exist pains the heart and that is fear. And the two assumptions indubitably conflict with each other, since the affair which is expected is in doubt.

Certainly one of the two aspects of doubt may preponderate over the other in proportion with the presence of certain of the means and the name of that is supposition, and that would be a cause of the dominance of one of the two over the other. And, when the existence of the object of desire dominates the supposition, hope is strengthened and fear is concealed in relation to it, and *vice versa*. And in every circumstance the two of them are interdependent, and, for that reason, He said: And they pray to Us through yearning and awe. (Q. xxi, 90). And He also said: They pray to their Lord through fear and yearning. (Q. xxxii, 16). And, for that reason, Arabic has defined fear in terms of hope, for He said: What is the matter with you? You do not hope in God with reverence. (Q. lxxi, 12). That is, you do not fear. And there are the many passages in the Qur'an where hope has the meaning of fear and that is because of their interdependence, since the practice of Arabic is to express a thing in terms of what is complementary to it.

More, I say that everything which constitutes the merit of weeping through fear of God is a demonstration of the merit of fear, for weeping is the fruit of fear. And He said: Then let them

laugh little and weep much (Q. ix, 83). And He said: They weep and it increases their humility. (Q. xvii, 109). And He said: Do you marvel at this discourse, and do you laugh and do you not weep, while you make merry? (Q. liii, 59-61). And he (Muhammad) said: There is no believing creature whose eye drops a tear—even if it were like the head of a fly—through fear of God, and then it drops on some part of his cheek, but that God has precluded him from the Fire. And he said: When the heart of a believer trembles because of the fear of God, his sins are stripped from him, just as a tree is stripped of its leaves. The Fire will not penetrate to anyone who weeps for fear of God, until the milk returns to the udder.

And 'Uqba b. 'Amir¹ said: What is salvation O Messenger of God? He said: Keep a rein on your tongue, keep to your house and weep for your sins. And 'A'isha said: I said: O Messenger of God, will anyone of your community enter the Garden irrespective of desert? He said: Yes, he who recollects his sins and weeps. He said: There is no drop more beloved of God than a tear-drop which is for fear of God, or a drop of blood which is shed in the 'path'² of God. He said: O God furnish me with moist eyes which cure through the shedding of tears, before the tears become blood and the stones live coals. And he said: God will give them shade seven times on a Day when there will be no shade but His shade, and will remember among them the man who has remembered God in private and whose eyes have overflowed with tears.

Abū Bakr³, the *Sincere*, said: Whoever is able to weep let him weep and whoever is not able to weep let him pretend to weep. It was customary with Muhammad b. al-Munkadir⁴ when he wept to wipe his face and beard with his tears and to say: I have heard that the Fire will not consume a place which tears have wiped. And 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣi⁵ said: Weep and, if you cannot weep, pretend to weep, for by Him in whose hand my soul is, if one of you possessed knowledge, he would cry out until his voice was cut off and would pray until his back was broken. Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī said: No eye fills up with its water but that neither dearth nor abasement will overtake the face of its master on the

¹ T.T., vii, 242 (439), d. 38/658-9; T. 40.

² i.e. in Holy War.

³ T. 2, d. 13/634.

⁴ T.T., ix, 473 (767), d. c. 130/755; T. 119.

⁵ T.T., v. 337 (575), d. 65/684.

Day of Resurrection. For, if his tears flow, God will extinguish with their first drop oceans of fire. And should one man in a community weep, that community would not be punished. And Abū Sulaymān said: Weeping is on account of fear and hope, and delight on account of yearning. And Ka'b al-Āhbār¹ said: By Him in whose hand my soul is, because I weep for fear of God until the tears overflow my cheeks, I command myself more than if I were to give supererogatory alms of a mountain of gold. And 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr² said: Because I weep a tear for fear of God, I command myself more than if I should give supererogatory alms with a thousand dinars.

And it is related concerning Ḥanẓala³ that he said: We were with the Messenger of God and he preached us a sermon by which our hearts were made tender and our eyes moist and we 'knew' ourselves. Then I returned to my family and my wife drew near to me and mundane conversation flowed between us, and I forgot what had occupied our minds in the presence of the Messenger of God, and we were taken up with this present world. Then I recollect what it was that had occupied our thoughts and I said within myself: I have played the hypocrite in that the fear and impressionableness that possessed me have passed away. So I went out and began to shout: Ḥanẓala is a hypocrite. And Abū Bakr, the *Sincere*, met me and said: No, Ḥanẓala has not played the hypocrite. Then I entered the presence of the Messenger of God, while I was saying: Ḥanẓala is a hypocrite. So the Messenger of God said: No, Ḥanẓala has not played the hypocrite. So I said: O Messenger of God we were with you and you preached us a sermon by which our hearts were made fearful and our eyes tearful and we 'knew' ourselves. Then I returned to my family and we were engaged in mundane conversation, and I forgot what engaged our minds when we were with you. So he said: O Ḥanẓala, would that you were always in that state, then the angels would take you by the hand on your journeyings and where you lie down, but, O Ḥanẓala, everything has its appointed time.

Therefore everything which constitutes the merit of hope and weeping and piety and abstinence and knowledge, and the reprehensibleness of fancied security, is a pointer to the merit of

¹ T.T., viii, 438 (793), d. c. 32/652.

² p. 43, n. 5.

³ I.H., iii, 20-1 (Guillaume, 377-8).

fear, because all of these are related to it either by way of cause or effect.

EXPOSITION THAT THE OPTIMUM IS THE DOMINANCE OF FEAR OR THE DOMINANCE OF HOPE OR THE TWO IN EQUILIBRIUM

Know that the traditions concerning the merit of fear and hope are legion, and often the observer will inspect the two of them and doubt will overwhelm him as to which of the two is the higher good. The person who says: Is fear or hope the higher good?, asks a spurious question which resembles the question: Is bread or water the higher good? The answer to it is to say that bread is the higher good for the person who is hungry and water for the person who is thirsty. And, if both are present in union, one has regard to which is the more dominant, and, if it is hunger, bread is the higher good and, if it is thirst, water is the higher good. If they are in balance, bread and water are on par. This is so because everything which is willed in reference to a goal has its merit disclosed in relation to its goal, not to itself. And fear and hope are therapies by means of which hearts are cured and their respective merits are in proportion to the extant disease. For, if what has dominion over the heart is the disease of fancied security from the strategems of God and being self-deceived thereby, fear is the higher good. And, if the most dominant factors are hopelessness and a despairing of the mercy of God, hope is the higher good. Similarly, if disobedience has mastery over the creature, fear is the higher good.

And it is allowable to say absolutely that fear is the higher good, in the sense that it is said: Bread is a higher good than oxymel, since the sickness of hunger is treated with bread and that of jaundice with oxymel, and the disease of hunger is more dominant and frequent, so that the need of bread is the more frequent, and so it is the higher good. And, in this sense, the dominance of fear is the higher good, because disobedience and self-deceit are the more dominant over the creature. And, if one looks at the source of fear and hope, hope is the higher good, because it is an outlet from the sea of mercy, and the outlet of fear is from the sea of wrath. And whoever is attentive to those attributes of God which decree kindness and mercy, love will dominate him and there is no station beyond love. With regard to fear its prop is a turning towards those attributes which decree severity and love does not mingle with it as it does with hope.

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In sum, it is proper to employ in reference to whatever is willed for other than itself the expression *more salutary* and not the expression *more meritorious*. So we say: For the most of people fear is more salutary than hope, and that, because of the dominance of disobedience. As for the pious person who has forsaken sin, outward and inward, concealed and open, what is most salutary is that his hope and fear should be in equilibrium. For that reason it was said: If the fear and hope of the believer were weighed, they would balance each other. And it is reported that 'Ali said to one of his children: Fear God with such a fear as will make you see that, if you brought Him the good deeds of (all) the people of the earth, He would not accept them from you; and hope in God with such a hope as to make you see that, if you brought Him the evil deeds of (all) the people of the earth, He would pardon you for them. Hence 'Umar¹ said: If it were proclaimed: Let everybody except one man enter the Fire, I should hope that I was that man. And, if it were proclaimed: Let everyone enter the Garden except one man, I should fear that I was that man. And this is an explanation of the object of fear and hope and their being in equilibrium, notwithstanding dominance and mastery, by means of counterpoise and equalization.

And so with a person like 'Umar¹ it is fitting that his fear and hope should be on par. As for the disobedient man, when he supposes that he is the person who is excepted from those who are commanded to enter the Fire, that is a pointer to his self-delusion. And, if you say: It is not fitting with a person like 'Umar that his fear and hope should be on par. No, it is fitting that his hope should be dominant (as above, in the first part of the *Book of Hope*) and that its strength should be in proportion to the strength of the means to it, as was illustrated by the sowing and the seed. And it is known that whoever sows healthy seed in clean ground and perseveres in cultivating it, and fulfills all the conditions of agriculture, the hope of attainment dominates his heart, so that his fear is not on par with his hope, and it is proper that the states of the pious should be such.

Know therefore that whoever picks up 'knowledge' from verbal expressions and parables multiplies his error, and that is so, even if we have cited a parable to him. So what we were dealing with is not comparable in every respect, since the cause of the dominance

¹ T. 6, d. 23/644.

of hope was the knowledge which is the result of experience. For he knew by experience the health of the soil and its cleanliness and the health of the seed and the salubriousness of the atmosphere and the paucity of lethal thunderbolts in that area and so on. For the parable of our proposition would be a seed whose species has not been tried, which has been scattered on unfamiliar soil, which the sower has not prepared nor tested, in a country where he does not know whether thunderbolts are frequent or not. And with such a sower as this, even if he exerts himself to the utmost and fulfills all that is in his power, his hope will not be dominant over his fear.

And the seed in our proposition is faith and the conditions of its health are minute. And the soil is the heart whose hidden and open vices derive from concealed polytheism and hypocrisy and apostasy, and its hidden properties are beneath the surface. And the blights are lusts and blandishments of this world and the turning of the heart towards them in the future. And, even if he is safe at the moment, that is on account of what he cannot verify and does not 'know' by experience, since it may chance from causes whose succession he cannot comprehend and whose like he has not experienced.

And the thunderbolts are the terrors of the pangs of death, and the disturbance of belief in its presence, and that belongs to those things whose like he has not experienced. Then the Reaping and the Result at the moment of the departure from the Resurrection to the Garden, and that he has not experienced. So whoever 'knows' the essentials of these matters, if he were faint-hearted and cowardly in himself, his fear would indubitably dominate his hope, as it will be related concerning the states of those who feared among the Companions and the Followers. And, if he were stout-hearted and of a steadfast nature and complete in 'knowledge', his fear would be on par with his hope. As for the suggestion that his hope would be dominant, this should not be entertained.

And 'Umar was in the habit of going over the score in the examination of his heart. So he used to ask Ḥudhayfa¹ whether he knew of any traces of hypocrisy in him, since the Messenger of God had made him (Ḥudhayfa) a specialist in the science of hypocrites. For who is the person who is able to purify his heart from the hidden things of hypocrisy and latent polytheism, and, if he has

¹ I.H., iii, 250; T.T., ii, 219 (405), d. 36/656-7.

secured the cleansing of his heart to the exclusion of that, how will he be secure from the strategems of God in confusing him as to his state and hiding his defects from him? And, if he is confident about this, whence can he be confident about his being preserved in that condition, until the completion of the goodness of the Seal?

163 And he (Muhammad) said: Let a man do the works of the People of the Garden for fifty years, so that only a span remains between him and the Garden (and, in a variant, only the time between two milkings of a she-camel), then the Book will predestinate and seal him with the work of the People of the Fire. And the interval between two milkings of a she-camel does not allow the possibility of an action with the members. It is no more than the duration of a fleeting impulse which penetrates the heart at death and decrees the Seal of evil, and how can one be secure from that?

So the most ultimate objective of the believer is that his hope and fear should be in equilibrium, and the dominance of hope with the most of people would be a leaning on self-deceit and a dearth of 'knowledge'. For this reason God has united both of them in the description of the persons whom He has eulogized. For He said: They pray to their Lord through fear and yearning. (Q. xxxii, 16). And He said: They pray to Us through yearning and awe. (Q. xxi, 90). And where is the like of 'Umar? So what is most salutary for the people who are alive at this time, all of them, is the dominance of fear, with the proviso that it does not bring them to hopelessness and abandonment of action, and severing of the yearning for pardon, for that would be a cause of shirking work and a summons to obstinate persistence in disobedience. For that is despair and not fear, since fear is that which provides an incentive for action and blackens all the lusts, and snatches the heart away from reliance on this world, and summons it to withdraw from the home of self-deceit. This is commendable fear; it is not a passing impulse of the soul which does not take effect in restraint and incentive. Nor is it hopelessness which decrees despair.

So Yaḥyā b. Mu'ādh said: Whoever serves God with undiluted fear is drowned in a sea of reflection. And whoever serves Him with undiluted hope goes astray in a desert of self-deceit. And whoever serves Him with fear and hope is established in a highway of recollection. And Makhlūf¹ of Damascus said: Whoever serves

¹ T.T., x, 289 (509), d. 113/731-2; T. 101.

God with fear is a *Khārijite*¹, and whoever serves Him with hope is a *Murjīt*², and whoever serves Him with love is a free-thinker³, and whoever serves Him with fear and hope and love is a *Unitarian*. Therefore these three conditions cannot but be united, and the dominance of fear is most salutary, except at the point of death. At death the dominance of hope and optimism are the most salutary, because fear has the effect of the whip which urges to action, and the time of action has passed away, and so the person who is at the point of death has no power over action. Then the means of fear do not avail, for they cut the sinews of his heart and assist the hastening of his death.

But the breath of hope strengthens his heart and commands to him his Lord towards whom is his hope; and it is not expedient that anyone should leave this world except out of love for God, in order that he may be desirous of meeting with God. For whoever desires to meet with God, God desires to meet with him, and hope joins him to love. So whoever hopes for this magnanimity is beloved, and the goal of all sciences and actions is 'knowledge' of God, so that 'knowledge' produces love. For the trend is towards Him and the advance at death is towards Him, and the joy of him who advances towards his Beloved is great in proportion to his love, and whoever abandons his Beloved has his tribulations and punishment intensified.

Wherever the heart is dominated at death by love of family and children and wealth and dwelling and estates and friends and companions, all the things which this man desires are in this world and so this world is his Garden, since the Garden is an expression for the territory which unites all that is desired. Hence his death is an exit from the Garden and the placing of an obstacle between him and what he desires, and there is no concealing the state of the man who has had an obstacle placed between him and what he desires. And, if he had no object of desire but God and the recollection of Him and 'knowledge' of Him and reflection on Him, this world and its ties would be a distraction to him to the exclusion of the Beloved. So this world is a prison, because a prison is an

¹ *Harūn*. Dozy, *in loc.*, who says that the meaning is *strong, generous*, alluding to the *Khārijites* who fought under the name of *Harurites*.

² One who defers, that is, who postpones judgement, until it is pronounced by God on the Day of Judgement. See M.T., 122-7.

³ Or, perhaps, *Manichaeans*. See L.H.A., 375, n. 2, for observations on *zindiq*.

expression for the place which obstructs the imprisoned from being refreshed by the things desired, and so his death is an advance towards his Beloved and is salvation from the prison; and there is no concealing the state of the man who has escaped from the prison and is closeted with his Beloved without obstruction or alloy.

This is the first reward and punishment which everyone who leaves this world consequent on death will meet, exclusive of what God has prepared for His creatures who are sound in faith, of those things which the eye does not see nor the ear hear, nor has it occurred to the heart of man; and exclusive of what God has prepared for those who love the life of this present world in preference to the next world, and are satisfied with it and feel secure in it from bonds and chains and manacles and blows of disgrace and chastisement. So let us ask God to bring us to die as Muslims and to annex us to the sound in faith. And there is no hope of an answer to this petition except by the acquisition of the love of God, and there is no path to it except by the expulsion of other than God from the heart and the severing of ties from all that is other than God—from rank and wealth and country.

What is most fitting is that you should make petition as the Prophet did, when he said: O Lord furnish me with Your love and the love of whoever loves You, and the love of whatever brings me near to Your love and makes Your love more beloved to me than

164 cold water. And the conclusion to be drawn is that the dominance of hope is more salutary at death, because it is most conducive to love; and the dominance of fear is more salutary before death, because it best kindles the fire which burns up lusts, and best chokes the love of this world out of the heart. And, for that reason, he (Muhammad) said: Let not one of you die except he supposes the best of his Lord. And He said: I identify Myself with what My creature supposes of Me, so let him suppose of Me what he will. And, when death was present with Sulaymān at-Taymi¹, he said to his son: O my son, tell me about the indulgences of God and remind me about hope, so that I may meet God supposing the best of Him. Similarly when death was present with ath-Thawri² and his pangs were intensified, the Scholars gathered around him lending him hope. And Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal³ said to his son at death:

¹ T.T., iv, 175 (304), d. 172/788-9.

² Sufyān, p. 7, n. 3.

³ H.A., 399, d. 241/855.

Remind me of the traditions which have hope and optimism in them. And the goal of all that was that he should commend God to himself.

And thus God revealed to David: Command Me to My creatures. And he said: In what way? He said: By your recollecting to them My benefits and bounties. Therefore ultimate bliss is that one should die loving God and love is attained only through 'knowledge' and through the expulsion of the love of this world from the heart, so that the whole world is like a prison which denies access to the Beloved. Hence one of the sound in faith saw Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī in a vision and he was air-borne. So he questioned him and he (Abū Sulaymān) said: Now I am escaping. And, when he (one of the sound in faith) awoke in the morning, he asked after him, and it was said to him: Truly he died yesterday.

EXPOSITION OF THE THERAPY BY WHICH THE STATE OF FEAR IS INDUCED

Know that what we have mentioned concerning the therapy of patience and have expounded in *The Book of Patience and Gratitude*¹ will suffice for this purpose, because patience is only possible after the attaining of fear and hope, since the first of the stations of religion is assurance which is an expression for strength of faith in God and the Last Day and the Garden and the Fire. And this assurance necessarily excites fear of the Fire and hope of the Garden, and hope and fear fortify patience. For the Garden has been enclosed with abhorrent things, and no one has patience to endure them except through the strength of hope. And the Fire has been surrounded with lusts and no one has patience to quench them except through the strength of fear. And, for this reason, 'Ali said: Whoever longs for the Garden is diverted from lusts, and whoever guards against the Fire recoils from things forbidden.

Then the station of patience, which is derived from fear and hope, gives access to the station of spiritual combat and exclusive devotion to the recollection of God and constant reflection on Him. And constant recollection gives access to intimacy and constant reflection to the perfection of 'knowledge'. And perfection of 'knowledge' and intimacy give access to love and the station of satisfaction and trustfulness, and the remainder of the stations follow it. And this

¹ *Iḥyā*, iv, (1939), 59-128.

is the order of ascent of the stages of religion; and no station can succeed the root of assurance except fear and hope, and only patience can succeed these two, and accompanying it is spiritual combat and utter devotion to God outwardly and inwardly. And for the person to whom the way has been opened up there can be no station after spiritual combat except guidance and 'knowledge'. And only the station of love and intimacy can succeed 'knowledge', and following necessarily on love is satisfaction with the action of the Beloved and confidence in His care which is trustfulness.

Therefore what we have mentioned concerning the regimen of patience is sufficient, but we shall single out fear particularly in a summing-up and shall say: Fear gives access to two diverse ways, one higher than the other. And its parable is that, if a youth were in a house and a lion or snake came into him, he would probably not be afraid and would stretch out his hand towards the snake that he might take hold of it and play with it. But, if his father were with him, since he is knowledgeable, he would be afraid of the snake and would flee from it. And, if the lad should look at his father while he was trembling and was making to flee because of it, he would be identified with him and fear would conquer him and he would accompany him in flight. So the fear of the father is on account of insight and 'knowledge' of the attributes of the snake and its poison and its particular characteristics; and the might of the lion and its violence and lack of concern. And the fear of the son and his faith are entirely attributable to authority, because he thinks well of his father and knows that he is not afraid except on account of what excites fear in itself; and so he knows that the lion is a threat, but he does not 'know' the cause of it. And, if you 'know' this parable, note that the fear of God is on two planes. One is fear of His punishment and the second is fear of Him.

With respect to fear of Him it is the fear of the Knowledgeable¹ and the Spiritual Directors; of those who know such of His attributes as decree awe and fear and caution; of those who scrutinize the inner secret of His saying: God warns you to beware of Him. (Q. iii, 27, 28). And His saying: Fear God with the fear which is His due. (Q. iii, 97). With respect to the first it is the fear of the rank and file of the people, and is a product of the root of faith in the Garden and the Fire, and that they are respectively the rewards of obedience and disobedience. And its weakness is due to

¹ See p. 10, n. 2.

negligence and weakness of faith. And negligence can only be erased by recollection and preaching and tenacious reflection on the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and the classes of punishment in the next world. And it is erased also by observing those who fear and sharing their company and through the vision of their states. And, if sight should fail, hearing will not be sealed off from receiving impressions. With regard to the second it is higher, because it is God Himself who inspires fear. I mean that the creature both fears being veiled from Him and hopes for nearness to Him. *Dhu 'l-Nūn* said: The fear of the Fire in comparison with the fear of alienation is like a drop which is shed in a fathomless sea. And this is the fear of the Knowledgeable¹ according as He said: Only the knowledgeable among His creatures fear God. (Q. xxxv, 25).

But the rank and file of the believers also have a portion of this fear, but it rests exclusively on authority. It is also the fear which the lad had of the snake on the authority of his father which does not rest on insight and is indubitably weak and soon fades away. So that the lad may chance to see the snake-charmer approach and take hold of the snake, and may observe him and be deceived by him and venture to take hold of it in imitation of him, just as he recoiled from taking hold of it in imitation of his father. And tenets which rest on authority are, for the most part, weak, except when they are strengthened by the sight of the means to them which constantly reinforce them, and by perseverance in what they decree so as to multiply acts of obedience and avoid acts of disobedience unremittingly over a long period.

Therefore whoever ascends to the apex of 'knowledge' and 'knows' God, fears Him of necessity, and has no need of the regimen which induces fear; just as whoever 'knows' the lion and sees himself falling into its claws has no need of the regimen which will induce fear in his heart. No, he fears it of necessity, whether he wills it or not. Hence God revealed to David: Fear Me as you fear the harmful lion. And there is no device for inducing fear of the harmful lion except 'knowledge' of the lion and 'knowledge' of falling into its claws, and there is no need of any device besides it. So whoever 'knows' God 'knows' that He does what He wills and does not care, and legislates as He desires and is not afraid. He brought the angels near without prior merit, and He banished the

¹ See p. 10, n. 2.

Devil irrespective of the question of previous sin. More, His character is as His saying has explained it: These are in the Garden and I do not care, and these are in the Fire and I do not care. And, if it occurs to your mind that He does not punish except on account of disobedience, nor reward except on account of obedience, consider that He has not furnished the obedient man with the means of obedience, so that he is obedient whether he wills it or not; and He has not furnished the disobedient man with the motives of disobedience, so that he is disobedient whether he wills it or not. And, whenever He creates negligence and lust and power to fulfil the lust, the action follows on them of necessity. For, if He alienated a person because he was disobedient to Him, and did not incite him to disobedience, was this because of a prior disobedience? In which case there is an infinite regress; or else it comes to a halt, doubtless, at a first principle which is uncaused from the point of view of the creature. No; it was decreed for him from all eternity.

And he (Muhammad) explained the meaning of this when he said: Adam and Moses had an argument concerning their Lord, and Adam had the better of the argument. Moses said: You are Adam whom God created with His hand and into whom He breathed of His breath. And He made the angels do obeisance to you and he made you a resident of His Garden. Then you caused the people to fall to the earth through your sin. And Adam said: You are Moses whom God chose for His Apostolate and His Word and gave you the Tablets¹ on which were an exposition of everything. And He brought you near as one noble-born. By how many years did you find that God wrote down the Law before I was created? Moses said: By forty years. Adam said: And did you find in it: And Adam disobeyed his Lord and was led astray? He said: Yes. He said: Do you then blame me because I performed an action which God had inscribed against me before I did it and forty years before He created me? Thus Adam out-argued Moses.

And whoever 'knows' the cause in this matter with a 'knowledge' which stems from the light of guidance belongs to the *élite* of the Gnostics; to those who scrutinize the secret of predestination. And whoever hears this and believes in it and affirms its truth solely on the strength of what he has heard, belongs to the rank and file of the believers. And everyone in both of these groups is affected by fear. For every creature is as one falling into the clutch of

¹ Cf. Ex. xxxii, 15 f.; Deut. x, 1 f.

predestination, just as the weakly youth who falls into the claws of the lion. And the lion may chance to be heedless and leave him alone; and it may pounce on him and maul him; and that is regulated by what is contingent. Connected with this contingency are causes which are graduated in proportion with how much is known. But, when it (the contingency) is related to one who does not know it, (the cause) it is called contingency. And, if it is related to the knowledge of God, it is not permissible that it should be called contingency. As for the person who falls into the claws of the lion, if his 'knowledge' were perfect, he would not be afraid of the lion, since the lion is coerced. If hunger dominates it, it will maul, and, if heedlessness dominates it, it will ignore and leave alone. So he would be afraid only of the Creator of the lion and His attributes. And I am not going to say that fear of the lion is a parable of fear of God. No; when the cover is withdrawn, it will be known that fear of the lion is the very fear of God, because the One who kills by means of the lion is God.

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And know that the lions of the next world are like the lions of this world, and that God has created the means of punishment and reward, and has created for everyone a complement. The predestination which is a branch of the irrevocable and eternal decree drives him towards what is created for him. So He created the Garden and created for it a complement who are coerced by the means to it, whether they will it or not. And He created the Fire and created for it a complement who are coerced by the means to it, whether they will it or not. And no person sees himself in the buffeting of the waves of predestination but that fear of necessity dominates him. And these are the things concerning the secret of predestination which the Gnostics fear. And, if a person is a party to a deficiency which precludes the ascent to the station of insight, his procedure is to treat himself with the hearing of the traditions and the reports, and to search out the states and sayings of the Gnostics who feared, and compare their intellect and rank with the rank of those who were self-deceived in their hoping. And there is no doubt that the imitating of them is most fitting, because they are the Prophets and Saints and Knowledgeable.

As for those who think themselves secure, they are the arrogant and ignorant and remiss. As for our Messenger, he is the Master of the first and the last, and he was of all men subject to the most intense fear. So that it is related that he was praying over an

infant and that (according to one recension) he was heard to say in his petition: O God, preserve him from the punishment of the grave and the punishment of the Fire. And (in a second recension) that he heard someone saying: Congratulations to you, one of the sparrows of the Garden. And he was angry and said: How did you get to know that it is so ordered? By God! I am the Messenger of God and I have not ascertained what He will do with me. Truly God has created the Garden and has created for it a complement which may not be increased nor diminished. And it is related that he (Muhammad) said that also over the bier of 'Uthmān b. Maz'ūn¹, who was among the first of the Emigrants, when Umm Salama² said: May you enjoy the Garden! And Umm Salama used to say thereafter: By God! I do not eulogize anyone after 'Uthmān. And Muḥammad b. Khawla al-Hanafiya³ said: I do not ascribe merit to anyone except the Messenger of God, not even to my father who begat me. And the Shi'ites were roused against him and he began to mention the merits and attainments of 'Ali.

And it is related in another account concerning a man belonging to the People of the Bench⁴ who died a martyr's death; whose mother said: Congratulations to you, one of the sparrows of the Garden. You emigrated to the Messenger of God and you were killed in the path of God. And he (Muhammad) said: And how did you get to know? Perhaps he conversed in what will not benefit him and proscribed what will not injure him. And it is related that he (Muhammad) came into the presence of one of his Companions¹⁶⁷ who was ill and he heard a woman saying: May you have the joy of the Garden! And he said: Who is this swearing by God? So the sick man said: She is my mother, O Messenger of God. So he said: And how did you get to know? Perhaps so and so conversed in what will not benefit him and was thrifty in what will not enrich him.

And how will every believer not be afraid when he (Muhammad) says: Hūd and her sisters have made me gray-haired⁵. Sūra al-Wāqi'a (Q. lvi) and "When the sun shall be darkened" (Q. lxxxi, 1)

¹ I.H., i, 301. M.M., 115-7.

² T.T., xii, 455 (2905), d. 61/681.

³ See p. 18, n. 1.

⁴ E. 63. So called because they were poor devotees whose custom it was to sit on stone benches outside the mosques and live on the alms of the faithful. K. 81-2, 'People of the Veranda'.

⁵ Cf. Q. lxxii, 17.

and "About what do they bandy questions"? (Q. lxxviii, 1). And the Scholars said: Perhaps that refers to what is in the Sūra al-Hūd in reference to banishment according to His saying: Ho, away with 'Ād¹, the people of Hūd. (Q. xi, 63). And Ho! away with Thamūd¹ (Q. xi, 71). And Ho! away with Midian² as Thamūd is far away. (Q. xi, 98). This, although he (Muhammad) knew that, if God had willed it, they would not have been polytheists, since, if it were His will, He would bring every soul its guidance. And in the Sūra al-Wāqi'a: None denies its taking place, abasing, exalting. (Q. lvi, 2, 3). That is, the reed-pen is dry with things as they are fixed, and what is foreordained has come to completion, so that the event comes down, whether it be the abasing of a people who were exalted in this world, or the exalting of a people who were abased in this world. And in the Sūra at-Takwir (Q. lxxxi) are the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and the disclosing of the Seal, namely His saying: When Hell will be set blazing, when the Garden will be brought near, a soul will know what it has presented. (Q. lxxxi, 12-14). And in "About what do they bandy questions?" (Q. lxxviii, 1): On a day when a man will see what his hands have sent forward—to the end of the verse. (Q. lxxviii, 41). And His saying: They will not speak except for him to whom the Merciful may give permission and who speaks aright. (Q. lxxviii, 38).

And the Qur'ān from first to last is a source of dread to whoever reads it thoughtfully, and, if there was nothing in it except His saying: But I am forgiving to whoever repents and believes and does what is sound and at last is guided, (Q. xx, 84) that would be sufficient, since He has made pardon dependent on four conditions to fulfil any one of which the creature is impotent. And more rigorous than it is His saying: But as for him who repents and believes and does what is sound, perchance he may be among those who prosper. (Q. xxviii, 67). And His saying: That He might question the truthful as to their truthfulness. (Q. xxxiii, 8). And His saying: We shall attend to you at leisure, you weight and you weight!³ And His saying: Do they feel secure then against the strategems of God—to the end of the verse. (Q. vii, 97). And His saying: Such is the grip of your Lord, when He takes hold of a

¹ For 'Ād and Thamūd see H.A., 30, 32, 37.

² See L. H. Grollenberg, *Atlas of the Bible*, 1957, p. 44, Map 9.

³ Q. iv, 31. The translation: "you weight and you weight!" is Arberry's. Bell translates: "O ye two burdensome companies", and refers the phrase to men and jinn.

town in its wrong-doing; surely His grip is painful, terrible. (Q. xi, 104). And His saying: On the Day when We shall gather those who show piety to the Merciful like an embassy.—both verses. (Q. xix, 88-9). And His saying: There is not one of you but shall go down to it—to the end of the verse. (Q. xix, 72). And His saying: Do what you will—to the end of the verse. (Q. xli, 40). And His saying: If anyone wishes the tillage of the world to come, we shall give him increase in his tillage—to the end of the verse. (Q. xlvi, 19). And His saying: Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it—both verses. (Q. xcix, 7-8). And His saying: But We shall set upon the work which they have done—to the end of the verse. (Q. xxv, 25). And similarly His saying: By the afternoon! surely man is in the way of loss—to the end of the Sūra. (Q. ciii, 1-3).

So these are the four conditions of salvation from loss¹. And the fear of the prophets was (possible) only in association with the grace which overflowed to them, since they did not think themselves secure from the strategems of God; and only the people of perdition think themselves secure from the strategems of God². So that it is related that the Prophet and Gabriel were weeping for fear of God, and God revealed to both of them: Why do you weep, since I have made both of you secure? So they said: And who is secure from Your strategems? And it was as if both of them, since they knew that God Himself is the Knower of hidden things, and that He does not acquaint them with the ultimate goal of affairs, did not think themselves secured against His saying "I have made both of you secure" being a way of trying and testing them and plotting against them, so that, if their fear had been quietened, it would have been clear that they thought themselves secure from the strategems and had not fulfilled their saying.

Similarly with Abraham who, when he was deposited in the missile, said: Bear me in mind, O God. And this was one of the great petitions. So he was tested and was joined by Gabriel in the air, so that he (Gabriel) said: Are you in need? He said: Not of you. And that was a fulfilment of the essence of His saying: Bear me in mind, O God. And so God related of him saying: And Abraham who fulfilled³. That is, what was entailed by his saying: Bear me in mind, O God.

¹ See Q. xx, 84.

² Cf. Q. vii, 97.

³ Q. liii, 38. "Who paid his debt in full" (Arberry).

And, as a parable of this, it is reported concerning Moses that, when he said: Truly we are afraid that He may neglect us or be remiss, He said: Do not be afraid, surely I shall be with both of you, hearing and seeing. (Q. xx, 48). And, in spite of this, when the magicians cast their spells¹, Moses quaked with fear within himself, because he did not feel secure from the strategems of God, and he was confused over the affair until security was renewed to him, and it was said to him: Fear not, surely you are the uppermost. (Q. xx, 71). And, when the power of the Muslims was weak on the day of Badr², he (Muhammad) said: O God, if you kill this band, no one will remain on the face of the earth to serve You. And Abū Bakr said: Leave off badgering your Lord. Surely He will fulfil for you according as He has promised you. For he was at the station of the *Sincere*, the station of reliance on the promise of God. And the station of the Messenger of God was that of fearing the strategems of God and it is the more complete, because it can derive only from perfection of 'knowledge' concerning the secrets of God and the concealed aspects of His actions and the meanings of His attributes which He expresses by such actions as derive from them by way of plotting.

And it is given to no human being to get to the bottom of the attributes of God. And, if a man 'knows' the essence of 'knowledge', and that his 'knowledge' comes short of getting to the bottom of affairs, his fear will indubitably be great. For that reason the Messiah said, when it was said to him (by God): Did you say to the people: Take me and my mother as gods apart from God?: Glory to You, what reason have I for saying what does not belong to me by right? If I did say it, You know it. You know what is in me but I do not know what is in You³. And he said: If You punish them they are Your creatures; if You pardon them—to the end of the verse. (Q. v, 118). He (Messiah) transferred the affair to the will and disassociated himself entirely from pronouncing as to his knowledge of it; because he had nothing to do with the affair, and because affairs are tied to the will with a connection which issues beyond the boundary of things intelligible and familiar, so that it is not possible to give a ruling on them by use of analogy or conjecture or opinion, *a fortiori* by verification and proof, and this is what the hearts of the Gnostics have grasped.

¹ Cf. Q. xx, 66 f.

² H.A., 116-7.

³ Cf. Q. v, 116.

For the greatest catastrophe is the tie-up of your affair with the Will of One who has no concern for you, if He kills you. For He has killed the like of you, an innumerable company, and He is continually punishing them in this world with different kinds of torments and diseases, and, in addition, He makes their hearts diseased with unbelief and hypocrisy. Then He perpetuates their punishment to all eternity. So it is reported concerning Him that He says: If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance, but now is My saying realized: Surely I shall fill Gehenna with jinn and men together¹. And He said: And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled: Surely I shall fill Gehenna—to the end of the verse.

And how can one fail to be afraid at that part of the saying which has been realized from all eternity, so that one may not yearn to attain to it? If the affair were undetermined, yearning would be of use in respect of it. But there is no alternative except to be resigned to it and to discriminate between the hidden things of predestination and the clear causes which are visible to the heart and members. And whoever has easy access to the means of evil has an obstacle between himself and the means of good, and his relationships are regulated from the side of this world; and so it is as if a disclosure were made to him by way of verifying the secret of predestination which predestined him as a reprobate. For, whenever easy access (to virtue) is created for him, (even if all the virtues are easily accessible and the heart is entirely cut off from this world and outwardly and inwardly set upon God) this decrees the lightening of fear, if the permanency of these circumstances is confidently assumed by him. But the peril of the Seal and the difficulty of safety fans into a blaze the fires of fear and it is not possible to extinguish them.

And how can the vicissitudes of circumstances offer security, while the heart of the believer is between two of the fingers of the Merciful, and the heart is violently overturned by the ferments of fate? And the Reverser of hearts has said: Surely from their Lord's punishment none feels secure. (Q. lxx, 28). And the most ignorant member of the populace is he who thinks himself secure, while He is crying out a warning against fancied security. And were it not that God is gracious with His creatures the Gnostics, when He refreshes their hearts with the breath of hope, their

¹ Q. xxxii, 13; cf. vii, 17; xi, 120; xxxviii, 85.

hearts would be consumed with the fire of fear. So the means of hope are a mercy to the *élite* of God, and the means of negligence are, from one point of view, a mercy to the rank and file of the creatures. Since, if the cover were withdrawn, souls would perish and hearts would be cut off because of fear of the Reverser of hearts. And one of the Gnostics said: If a pillar were interposed between me and one whom I knew to be a Unitarian for fifty years and then he died, I would not conclude that he was a Unitarian, because I would not be cognizant with what had been made clear to him in respect of reversal. And one of them said: If the choice were between martyrdom at the door of the house, and death in Islām at the door of the room, I would choose death in Islām, because I do not know what may chance to my heart between the door of the room and the door of the house.

And Abū 'l-Dardā¹ was in the habit of swearing by God: There is no one who thought himself secure because of his faith from being plundered by God at death, but He plundered him. And Sahl used to say: The fear of the *Sincere* at the evil of the Seal is present at every impulse and motion, and they are those whom God has described when He said: And their hearts are quaking. (Q. xxiii, 62). And, when Sufyān was at the point of death, he began to weep and be grief-stricken, and so it was said to him: O Abū 'Abd Allah, keep hoping, for the pardon of God is greater than your sins. So he said: Is it then because of my sins that I weep? If I knew that I should die a Unitarian, I would not be concerned should I meet God with sins the like of mountains.

And it is related concerning one of those who fear that he charged one of his brethren and said: When death is present with me, squat by my head. And, if you see me dying as a Unitarian, take hold of all that I possess and buy with it almonds and wine, and distribute it to the youths who inhabit the district, and say: This is the wedding-breakfast of one who has made good his escape. And, if I die in a state other than that of a Unitarian, acquaint the people to that effect, so that they be not deceived by the sight of my bier, so that whoever has most desire after insight may accompany my bier, to the end that dissimulation may not overtake me after death. He said: And by what token shall I know this? So he mentioned a mark to him. And he saw the mark of Unitarianism at his death, and so he bought wine and almonds and distributed

¹ T.T., viii, 175 (315), d. 32/652-3; T. 23.

them. And Sahl used to say: The novice fears lest he may be tried by disobedience, and the Gnostic fears lest he may be tried by unbelief. And Abū Yazid¹ used to say: Whenever I repair to the mosque, it is as if a girdle were around my middle², and I am afraid that it may lead me to the Church and the House of Fire, until I enter the mosque and the girdle is severed from me. And this happens to me five times every day³.

And it is related concerning the Messiah that he said: O band of disciples, you are afraid of deeds of disobedience, and we of the band of the prophets are afraid of unbelief. And it is related in the traditions of the prophets that a prophet complained to God of hunger and lice and nakedness over a period of years, and his habit was that of a Ṣūfi. And God revealed to him: O my creature, are you not content that I have defended your heart from unbelief in Me, so that you ask Me for this world? So he took up dust and laid it on his head and said: Yes, I am content, O Lord, defend me from unbelief. And, since the fear of the Gnostics, in spite of the imprints of their feet and the power of their faith, was on account of the evil of the Seal, how will the weaklings not fear it?

And the evil of the Seal has causes which come to the forefront as death approaches, such as modernism, hypocrisy and pride, and a host of reprehensible characteristics. Hence the fear which the Companions had of hypocrisy was intense so that al-Hasan said: If I knew that I was innocent of hypocrisy, it would be more desirable to me than the place on which the sun rises. And what is meant in this connection is not the hypocrisy which is the contradiction of the root of faith. No, what is intended by it is the hypocrisy which unites with the root of faith, so that a Muslim is (at the same time) a hypocrite. And it possesses many marks. He (Muhammad) said: There are four ways in which a man may dissimulate and in each case he is a pure hypocrite, even if he prays and fasts and claims that he is a Muslim. And, if there is in him an offshoot of these practices, there is in him also a branch of hypocrisy, so that he abandons them. The man who, when he relates, falsifies; when he promises, is fickle; when he is relied on, is false; when he litigates, commits perjury. And (in another recension): When he

¹ R.R., 90-103, d. 261/875.

² i.e. the belt of a Christian monk.

³ i.e. in connection with the five statutory prayers.

covenants is faithless. And the Companions and Followers have offered such an exegesis of hypocrisy that only the person who is *Sincere* is isolated from every detail of it. For al-Hasan said: Surely hypocrisy is differentiated into secrecy and openness and tongue and heart and what goes in (to the heart) and what comes out¹. And who is the man who is isolated from these meanings?

More, these matters have become commonplace with men through custom, and it is forgotten that they are entirely abhorrent. More, that almost had the status of a covenant in the epoch of the Prophethood, and how is the supposition (otherwise) in our time? So that Hudhayfa said: Let a man but speak a word concerning the covenant of God and he will become thereby a hypocrite. Truly I hear it from each of you ten times a day. And the Companions of the Messenger of God used to say: Should you but do works that are more minute in your eyes than a hair, we would count them among the major deeds for the sake of the covenant of the Messenger of God². And one of them said: A mark of hypocrisy is that you dislike in other people that whose like you produce; and that you hanker after anything that is wrong; and that you loathe anything that is right. And it was said concerning hypocrisy: When he is praised for anything he does not have, that makes him pleased.

And a man said to Ibn 'Umar³: Truly we go in to these chiefs and we swear that they are truthful in what they are saying, and when we come out, we talk about them among ourselves. So he (Ibn 'Umar) said: We counted this hypocrisy in relation to the covenant of the Messenger of God. And it is related that he (Ibn 'Umar) heard a man blaming al-Hajjāj⁴ and tackled him and said: Is it the case that, if al-Hajjāj were present, you would speak as you have spoken about him? He said: No. He said: We counted this hypocrisy⁵ in relation to the covenant of the Messenger of God. And more extreme than this is what is related how a certain party of men squatted at the gate of Hudhayfa, awaiting him, and they were conversing about some item of his business. And, when he came out to them, they were silent out of respect for him. So he said: Carry on with your conversation; and they kept silent. He

¹ Cf. Mt. xv, 10-20; Mk. vii, 14-23.

² Cf. Q. ix, 16.

³ T.T., v, 328 (560) d. c. 74/693.

⁴ H.I.P., 80-90, d. 714 A.D.

⁵ گلی is missing from the text of the 1939 ed.

said: We counted this hypocrisy in relation to the covenant of the Messenger of God.

And the Hudhayfa in question had been specially endowed with the knowledge of hypocrites and the causes of hypocrisy. And he used to say: Surely there comes upon the heart an hour when it is filled with faith, so that there is not a needle's head of room for hypocrisy in it; and there comes upon it an hour when it is filled with hypocrisy, so that there is not a needle's head of room for faith in it. And you know by this that the fear of the Gnostics is on account of the evil of the Seal, and that its causes are the affairs which precede it. Among them are modernism and disobedience and hypocrisy. And when is the creature isolated from every detail of the sum of this? And, if he supposes that he is isolated from it, he is a hypocrite. For it is said: Whoever feels secure from hypocrisy is a hypocrite. And one Gnostic said to another: Truly, I fear for myself with respect to hypocrisy. And he said: If you were a hypocrite, you would not be afraid of hypocrisy. And the attention of the Gnostic constantly alternates between predestination and the Seal, for fear of both of them, and, for this reason, he (Muhammad) said: The believing creature is between two threats; the term which has run its course in respect of which he does not know what God is doing about it; and the term which is still in being in respect of which he does not know what God is decreeing for it. And by the One in whose hand is my soul, there is no one to crave boons from after death, and, after this world, there is no dwelling-place but the Garden and the Fire. And God is the One of whom to ask help.

EXPOSITION OF THE MEANING OF THE EVIL OF THE SEAL

And if you say: Surely the fear of many of these people goes back to the evil of the Seal, so what is the meaning of the evil of the Seal? Know that the evil of the Seal has two degrees, one greater than the other. As for the major degree which most inspires dread, it consists in the fact that at the throes of death and the appearance of its terrors, the heart is dominated either by doubt or apostasy, and the spirit is snatched away when apostasy or doubt is the dominant state. And so what has gained ascendancy over the heart on account of the binding of apostasy is a veil between it and God for ever. And that decrees alienation in perpetuity and everlasting punishment.

And the second and lesser degree is constituted by a man's heart being dominated at death by the love of some worldly affair and lust, and this is imaged in his heart which is swamped by it, so that, in that state, there is room for nothing else. Then the snatching away of his spirit chances to fall while he is in that state. For the swamping of his heart by it is the bending of his head towards this world and the inclining of his face to it. And whenever the face is averted from God, the veil is obtained, and whenever the veil is obtained, punishment is reached, since the blazing fire of God will only take hold of those who are veiled from Him. And as for the believer whose heart is secured from the love of the world and whose attention is directed towards God, the Fire will say to him: Pass O believer, for your light has extinguished my flame. Whenever the snatching away of the spirit happens in a state when the love of the world is dominant, the affair is full of danger, because a man dies according as he lives. And it is not possible for the heart to acquire another characteristic after death which would contradict the characteristic which was dominant over it, since you cannot effect changes on the heart except by the actions of members, and the members have been made null by death, and so actions have also been nullified. So there is no hope of action and no hope of return to this world in order to make amends. In these circumstances the loss would be great were it not that the root of faith and the love of God, when they have been imprinted in the heart over a long period and have been reinforced by sound actions, erase from the heart this state which befell it at death. So, if the strength of a man's faith were up to a *mithqāl*¹, it would bring him out of the Fire in a short time; and, if it were less than this, his sojourn in the Fire would be lengthy; and, if it were no more than the weight of a seed, it would inevitably bring him out of the Fire, even if it were after thousands of years.

And if you say: What you have mentioned decrees that the Fire should speed to a person consequent on his death. What then is His purpose in delaying until the Day of Resurrection and procrastinating for the duration of this period? Know that whoever dislikes the punishment of the grave is a modernist who is veiled

¹ See Walther Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*, 1955, pp. 1-2. Hinz says that according to the *Shari'a* the *mithqāl* is to the dirham as 10:7, but that in practice the ratio is 3:2. According to G. 73 the *mithqāl* = 1½ dirhams.

from the light of God and the light of the Qur'ān and the light of faith. More, what is sound in the opinion of men of insight is what the traditions correctly state, namely, the grave is either one of the pits of the Fire or the meadows of the Garden, and there may open on to the grave of one who is to be chastised seventy gates of Gehenna. According as the traditions have adduced his spirit will not leave him except emaciation has settled on him, if he has been made a reprobate with the evil of the Seal. And the kinds of punishment vary with the times, and so the interrogation of Munkar and Nakir takes place at the moment of being deposited in the grave and chastisement is after it. Then the exhaustive scrutiny in making up the account, and shame because of the company of those who testify to the Day of Resurrection¹. Then after that the peril of the Bridge and it consists in the fact that the Warders of Hell—to the end of what the traditions adduce in this connection².

And the reprobate will be incessantly revolving in all his states between the different classes of punishment, and in the sum of his states he will be chastised, unless God covers him with His mercy. And you should not suppose that the dust will consume the *locus* of faith. No; the dust will consume all the members and will scatter them until the Book reaches its term. Then the dismembered pieces will be collected and the spirit which is the *locus* of faith will be brought back to them. From the time of death until its return it has been either in the crops of green birds which are suspended beneath the Throne, if it were blessed, or in a state which contradicts this if it were (may God defend us) reprobate.

172 And if you say: What then is the cause which leads to the evil of the Seal? Know that the enumeration in detail of the causes of these matters is not possible, but it is possible to indicate what they are in sum. With respect to the Seal which is on account of doubt and apostasy its cause is confined to two things. One of them can be envisaged along with complete abstinence and asceticism and perfect soundness of action, as, for example, the modernist who is an ascetic, for his latter end is perilous in the extreme, even if his actions should be sound. And I do not mean Practice and so

¹ p. 36, n. 1.

² This tradition runs as follows: "On the Day of Resurrection the Warders of Hell will make more speed towards rakes who are bearers of the Qur'ān than they will towards idol and fire worshippers". The fire worshippers are the Magians or Zoroastrians.

I say *modernism* (for an exposition of that¹ would require a lengthy statement). No, I mean the modernism which a man believes in respect of the essence of God and His attributes and actions, contrary to reality. And so he believes Him to be the contrary of what He actually is, either through his opinion and intellect and observation by means of which he conducts disputation and on which he relies and by which he is self-deceived; or through his appropriation on authority from whoever possesses the state in question.

And when death draws near and the forelock of the Angel of Death² is visible to him and his heart is confused by reason of what is in it, often the groundlessness of what he had believed through ignorance may be disclosed to him in the condition of the throes of death, since the state of death is that of the withdrawing of the cover and his throes have their origin in it. So a certain matter may thereby be disclosed to him, and, whenever he sees to be groundless what he had believed and concluded, of whose certainty he had been convinced within himself, he will not suppose within himself that he has erred in this tenet in particular, because of his having recourse in it to his pernicious opinion and deficient intellect. No, he will suppose that all he has believed is without root, since he does not draw any distinction between his faith in God and His Messenger and the remainder of his sound tenets, and his pernicious tenets. Hence the disclosure that certain of his tenets derive from ignorance is a cause of making null and void the remainder of his tenets or of awakening his doubt in them. So, if the departure of his spirit chances to take place at that instant before he regains his steadfastness and returns to the root of faith, he is sealed with evil, and his spirit has gone out in a state of polytheistic belief (and God is our defence from that). And it is these things that are intended in His saying: But there would appear to them from God what they had not been reckoning on. (Q. xxxix, 48). And in His saying: Say: Shall We announce to you who will be the greatest losers in their works, whose effort goes astray in this present life, though they think they are doing well. (Q. xviii, 103-4).

And just as there may be disclosed in sleep what will be in the future and that is because of the lightening of the cares of the

¹ i.e. an exposition of what is meant by *madhab* which I have translated *Practice*.

² i.e. 'Izrā'īl. E.I., ii, 570; iii, 189.

world from the heart, similarly certain matters are disclosed in the throes of death, since the distractions of the world and the lusts of the body are the things which obstruct the heart from observing the Kingdom¹ and scrutinizing what is in the Preserved Tablet², so that things as they are might be disclosed to it. And so the like of this state is a cause of disclosure, and disclosure is a cause of doubt concerning the remainder of the tenets. And anyone who believes anything in respect of God and His attributes and actions the contrary of what actually is, whether on authority or by observing opinion and intellect, is in this danger, and asceticism and soundness of action will not suffice to repel this danger. No, only belief in what is real will afford safety from it.

And the simple folk are far from this danger. I mean those who believe in God and His Messenger and the Last Day with a comprehensive and firmly-rooted faith, such as the bedouin and the negroes, and the rest of those common folk who have not waded into research and enquiry nor wallowed in systematic theology as if it were an absolute standard of reference. Nor have they inclined to the different kinds of systematic theologians, accepting on authority their divergent sayings; and, for that reason, he (Muhammad) said: The majority of the people of the Garden are simple folk. And, for that reason, the Fathers proscribed research and enquiry and the wading into systematic theology and the examination of these matters. And they commanded the people that they should restrict themselves to believing in what God has revealed in its totality and to what has come from meanings that are plain, along with its affirmation that analogy should be disowned. And they forbade them to wade into allegorical exegesis, because the danger involved in research into the attributes of God is great, and its ascents are steep and its paths are rugged, and the intellect comes short of attaining to the majesty of God. And the guidance of God with the light of assurance is veiled from human hearts according as they bear the inborn impress of the love of the world.

And what the researchers have mentioned by means of the

¹ G. 106 f.

² Q. lxxxv, 22. In the Qur'anic context the reference is to the pre-existent Qur'an. In Sufism the Preserved Tablet was part of the *impedimenta* of theosophic speculation. That there was the germ of this development in traditional material can be seen from the reference to the Tablets to which Moses had access and which contained an exposition of everything. (p. 54).

display of the wares of their intellects is a source of confusion and contradiction, for hearts are familiar with what has been inculcated into them at the beginning of their development and are attached to it. And the feud-promoting factions which occasion bloodshed among the people are nails which reinforce tenets inherited and appropriated with good hopes from teachers at the beginning of the affair. Then there are men of such a stamp that they are infatuated with the love of the world and turn to it, appropriating the lusts of the world and their strangleholds and swerving from completeness of reflection. Thus when the door of systematic theology is opened up in respect of God and His attributes by means of opinion and intellect, in spite of incompatibilities of temperament in people and differences in their make-up, and so every ignorant person among them is eager to claim perfection, or that he has encompassed the furthest reach of reality, their tongues go off with whatever chances to each of them. And that is attached to the hearts of those who incline to them and is consolidated through long familiarity with them, and the way of salvation is entirely blocked against them.

For the safety of the populace consists in their occupying themselves with sound actions and not becoming entangled with what is outwith the limit of their capacity. But at the moment the rein is loose and rubbish is being disseminated and every *ignoramus* comes down on the side of what suits his nature, armed with supposition and conjecture, and believes it is science and proof and unadulterated faith; and supposes that whatever he alights on by the use of hypothesis and appraisal is established science and certainty itself. And you shall surely know the account of it after a time. (Q. xxxviii, 88). And it is fitting that it should be declaimed concerning these people when the cover is withdrawn:

You were optimistic about the days when it was well with you,
And you did not fear the evil which fate brings;
And the nights made you feel safe and you were deceived by them,
For with clear nights comes the onset of murkiness.

Know for a certainty that everyone who forsakes the pure faith in God and His Messenger and His Book and wades into research has become entangled in this danger, and his parable is that of one whose ship is broken up, while he is in the buffettings of the waves, wave tossing him to wave; and it may happen that he will

be cast on to the shore, but that is a remote possibility, and the probability is that he will perish. And everyone who alights on a tenet which he has caught from the researchers through the display of the wares of their intellects—whether along with the proofs which they have composed in their partisan squabbles or without the proofs—if he doubts it, he is corrupt in his religion, and, if he trusts in it, he is thinking himself secure from the strategems of God, being self-deceived by his deficient intellect.

No person who wades into research can be disjoined from these two conditions, except when he has gone beyond the limits of the intellect to the light of disclosure which is the sunrise in the domain of Sainthood and Prophethood, and it is the purest gold in whatever way¹ it may be facilitated. Only the simple folk among the commonalty are safe from this peril or those whose preoccupation is the fear of the Fire along with obedience to God, and so they have not waded into these superfluities, for this is one of the means which promotes the peril of the evil of the Seal.

As for the second cause, it is weakness of faith in the root; then the mastery of the love of the world over the heart. And whenever there is weakness of faith, the love of God is weak and the love of the world is powerful. So it comes to pass that in the proportion that there remains in the heart no place for the love of God, except in respect of a fleeting impulse², no trace of it is visible in the counteracting of appetite or in the avoidance of the way of Satan. And that produces an obstinate persistence in the following of lusts, so that the heart is darkened and hardened, and darkness of appetites is heaped up upon the heart and constantly extinguishes what it contains of the light of faith, because of its faintness, so that it (the heart) becomes rusty and corroded.

And, when the throes of death come, the weakness of that love is intensified in impotence, I mean the love of God, with reference to the terror of separation from this world which appears, since it is the object of desire which is dominant over the heart. So the heart is afflicted with the terror of being separated from the world, and sees that it is from God, and so its most inward occupation is the dislike of the power of death over it—and loathing of it in so much as it is from God. So he is afraid that it may arouse

¹ ای, Wright, ii, 6.

² p. 30, n. 3.

in his inner self a loathing of God in the place of love. Just as the person who loves his son with a weak love, when his son has seized his possessions which are dearer to him than his son and has consumed them, this weak love is turned into loathing. And, if the departure of his spirit should happen to fall at that instant in which he is affected by this impulse, then he has been sealed with evil and has perished with an everlasting death. And the cause which leads to a Seal like this is the dominance of the love of the world and reliance on it, and joy in the means to it, together with weakness of faith which determines the weakness of the love of God.

Hence whoever finds the love of God in his heart more dominant than the love of the world (even if he should be in love with the world also) is more remote from this danger. And the love of the world is the head of every sin and is the incurable disease, and includes in its scope different classes of people. And all of that is due to paucity of the 'knowledge' of God, since only he who 'knows' Him can love Him. And, in reference to this He said: If your fathers and your sons and your brothers and your wives and your clan, and properties which you have acquired, and trade which you fear may grow slack, and dwellings in which you find satisfaction, are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and spiritual combat in His path then wait until God brings His command. (Q. ix, 24).

Therefore everyone whose spirit is severed from him in a state when the impulse of distaste towards God was in his mind and the hatred of the action of God was visible in his heart in respect of its effecting a separation between him and his family and his wealth and the remainder of his objects of desire, his death will be an advance upon what he loathes and a separation from what he loves, and so he will advance upon God as would a runaway slave who is odious, when he is brought forward to his master by force. And there is no concealing what he deserves of chastisement and punishment.

As for him who dies in a state of loving God, he will advance upon God as would the well-doing servant who longs after his master; who has endured the difficulties of actions and the toils of journeyings out of a yearning to meet him. And there is no concealing the joys and delights which he will encounter simply from his reunion, apart from what he will merit in the way of kindnesses of preferment and new benefits.

As for the second Seal which is inferior to the first and does not decree eternal punishment in the Fire, it also has two causes. One of them is the multitude of acts of disobedience, even if faith should be strong. And the other is weakness of faith, even if acts of disobedience should be few. And this is so, since the cause of the committing of acts of disobedience is the dominance of lusts and their being rooted in the heart through much usage and custom. And the recollection of everything with which a man has familiarized himself during his life returns to his heart at death. And, if his inclination, for the most part, was to acts of obedience, what is present with him will, for the most part, be the recollection of obedience to God. And, if his inclination, for the most part, was to acts of disobedience, the recollection of these will dominate his heart at death. And his spirit may be snatched away when some worldly lust or act of disobedience is dominant, and his heart will be shackled by it, and so it will be veiled from God. So the person who commits sin only occasionally is more remote from this peril, and the person who does not commit sin at all is very remote from this peril. As for the person whom acts of disobedience dominate and are more numerous than his acts of obedience; whose heart is more rejoiced with them than it is with his acts of obedience—in his case this peril is very great.

We can 'know' this by means of a parable. It consists in the fact that it is no secret to you that a man sees in his sleep the sum of the states with which he has made himself familiar during the length of his life, so that he sees only what images the objects which he has seen in waking life. So that the adolescent who has a dream will not see the picture of sexual intercourse, since he has never had intercourse in his waking life. And, if he were to remain permanently in this condition, he would not see in his dream the picture of sexual intercourse. Then it is transparent that he who has spent his life in jurisprudence will see more of the states that are related to the science and its practitioners than the merchant who has spent his life in trade. And the merchant will see more of the states which are related to trade and its means than the physician and the jurist, because what is manifest in the state of sleep is simply that to which there has obtained a relationship with the heart through length of familiarity or some other cause. And death resembles sleep but is beyond it. Nevertheless the throes of death and the swooning which precedes it are akin to sleep, and that

decrees the recollecting of what is familiar and its return to the heart.

And one of the causes which is preponderant in effecting its recollection in the heart is length of familiarity, and so length of familiarity with acts of disobedience or obedience is also a preponderant factor. And, in the same way, the dreams of those who are sound in faith are the contrary of those of rakes, and so the dominance of what is familiar is the cause, because a vicious image is pictured in a person's heart and his appetite inclines towards it, and his spirit may be snatched away in this state, and that will be a cause of the evil of his Seal, even if the root of faith remains to the extent that it gives out hope of salvation from it (the Seal). And just as what occurs in waking life only does so because of a particular cause which God knows, in the same way every dream has a cause in God. Some of them we 'know', and others we do not 'know'. Just as we know that the sensation is connected from the object sensed to its correlative, whether in respect of resemblance or contrariety or contiguity, in the sense that it (the correlative) has impinged on the attention as a consequence of it (the object sensed). With regard to resemblance in that one looks at a beautiful thing and recollects another beautiful thing. With regard to contrariety in that one looks at a beautiful thing and recollects something foul and reflects on the extreme incongruity between the two of them. With regard to contiguity in that one looks at a horse which he has seen previously with a man and recalls that man. And the sensation may perhaps be connected from one thing to another without one knowing the *rationale* of its relationship, and that can be constituted only by one middle term and two middle terms.

As, for example, when there is a connection from one thing to a second thing and from it to a third thing. Then the second thing is forgotten and there is no relationship between the third and the first, but there is a relationship between the third and the second and the second and the first. In the same way the relationships of sensations which occur in dreams have causes of this kind, and similarly in the presence of the throes of death. And bearing on this and the knowledge which is with God is the person whose main occupation is tailoring, for you see him inclining his head as if he would take up his needle to sew with it, and moistening his finger which is practised with the thimble, and taking the

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garment from above him and appraising and measuring it as if he would address himself to the cutting of it, and then reaching his hand to the scissors. And whoever is desirous of curbing what is impressed on him so as to exclude any connection with acts of disobedience and lusts—there is no way open to him except life-long combat to wean himself from them and to throttle lusts out of the heart. And this is the power which comes under choice, and long perseverance in virtue and isolation of reflection from evil are equipment and provisions against the state of the throes of death.

For a man dies as he has lived and is gathered (to judgement) as he has died, and, for that reason, it is related concerning a greengrocer that he was concentrating at death on the *Two Words*¹ while he was saying five, six, four, and was preoccupied with counting with which he had long familiarity before death. One of the Gnostics among the Fathers said: The Throne is a jewel blazing with light, and the creature has no state but its image is impressed on the Throne according to the form which it possesses. And, when he is in the throes of death, the form of it is revealed to him from the Throne, and it may be that he will see himself in the form of disobedience. And, in the same way, it is disclosed to him at the Day of Resurrection, and he sees the states of his soul and shame and fear surpassing description take hold of him. And what he recollects accurately and is a cause of veracious dreams is akin to that.

For the sleeper attains to what is in the future from the scrutiny of the Preserved Tablet² which is one of the departments of Prophethood. And thus the evil of the Seal has been traced back to the states of the heart and the transactions of impressions, and it is God who is the Reverser of hearts. And the contingencies which decree the evil of impressions do not entirely come under choice, even if length of familiarity should leave its mark on them. And, in this respect, the Gnostics have a massive fear of the evil of the Seal, because, if a man desires to see in his sleep nothing but the states of those who are sound in faith, and the states of acts of obedience and worship, that is hard for him, even if he possesses a great deal of soundness and perseverance by which he may effect it. But the confusions of phantasy are not wholly amenable

¹ i.e. the two affirmations of the *Shahāda*, there is no god but God, and Muhammad is His Messenger. See *Iḥyā*, i, 95-9.

² See p. 68, n. 2.

to control, even if, for the most part, what appears in sleep has a relationship to what is dominant in waking life.

Thus I heard the *Shaykh* Abū 'Alī al-Fārmadhi¹ describing to me that good conduct towards his *Shaykh* was obligatory on a novice, and that there was not to be in his heart dissent from anything that he should say, nor, in his tongue, any disputation with him. So he said: I related to my *Shaykh*, Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī, a vision which I had and I said: I saw you saying to me: Such and such. And I said: Not so. He continued: So he (the *Shaykh*) cut me off for a month and did not converse with me and said: Were it not that an excess of curiosity were within you and a dissent from what I am saying to you, that would not have run upon your tongue in sleep.

And it is as he said, since a man rarely sees in his sleep the contrary of what dominates his heart in his waking life, and so this is the predestination of which we make large mention in the science of the operation of the secrets of the affair of the Seal. And what is beyond that comes under the science of disclosure. And it has been made clear to you by this that security from the evil of the Seal would consist in your seeing all things as they are in themselves without ignorance, and your being successful all your life in obeying God without disobedience. Consequently, if you know that that is absurd or difficult, the fear which prevailed over the Gnostics will inevitably prevail over you, so that your weeping and wailing will be prolonged on this account, and your grief and anxiety will be permanent because of it, just as we shall relate concerning the states of the prophets and the Fathers who were sound in faith, that it may be one of the causes which will excite the fire of fear in your heart.

And you 'know' for certain by this that the actions of a lifetime are all perishable, if the best of which it partook is not secured within the soul at the exit of the spirit, and that its safety in company with the commotion of the waves of impressions is very dubious. And, for that reason, Muṭarrif b. 'Abd Allah² used to say: Truly I do not wonder at the man who perishes how he perishes, but I wonder at the man who is saved how he is saved. And, for that reason, Ḥāmid al-Laffāf said: Whenever the angels bring up the spirit of a creature who is a believer and has died in

¹ G. 17, d. 477/1084.

² T.T., x, 173 (324), d. c. 95/713; T. 60.

(a state of) virtue and Islām, the angels wonder at him and say: How was this man saved from a world in which the best of us were corrupted? And *ath-Thawrī* was weeping on a certain day and it was said to him: What are you weeping about? So he said: I have wept for my sins for some time and now I am weeping for Islām.

And, in sum, he whose ship chances on a fathomless sea with tempestuous winds assailing him and the waves in commotion is more remote from salvation than from perishing; and the heart of the believer is in a more intense commotion than the ship, and the waves of impressions have a greater impact than the waves of the sea. And the thing dreaded at death is simply the impression of an evil whose occurrence is unique and this is the thing of which the Messenger of God spoke: Truly let a man do the work of the People of the Garden for fifty years, so that between him and the Garden there remains but the time between two milkings of a she-camel, then he will receive the Seal according as the Book has predestined. And the time between two milkings of a she-camel does not leave room for actions which determine his reprobation. No; it is the impressions which produce commotion and which are impressed with the speed of forked lightning. And Sahl said: I beheld as if I were ushered into the Garden and I saw three hundred prophets and so I asked them: What was the thing that caused you most fear in this world? They said: The evil of the Seal.

176 And, because of this great peril, martyrdom was coveted and sudden death detested. Sudden death, because it may happen along with the dominance of an evil impression and its mastery over the heart; and the heart is not isolated from the like of it, except it repels (it)¹ through repugnance or the light of 'knowledge'. Martyrdom, because it is an expression for the snatching away of the spirit in a state when there remains in the heart nothing but the love of God, with the exit from the heart of the love of the world and family and wealth and children and every lust, since a man does not leap into the front-line disposing himself for death, except out of love to God and in the quest after the satisfaction which is from Him, exchanging his present world for his after-life and being satisfied with the bargain which God has made with him. For He said: God has purchased from the believers their persons and goods at the price of their possession of the Garden. (Q. ix, 112). And the seller has, no doubt, taken a dislike to the object sold, and

¹ Or: except it (the evil impression) is repelled.

the love of it is expelled from the heart and the exclusive love of the exchange sought is in his heart. And the like of this circumstance may prevail over the heart in certain states, but the expiry of the spirit does not occur during them. And the front-line is a cause of the expiry of the spirit in a circumstance which resembles this. This is so in respect of whoever is not aiming at dominion and booty and renown for bravery. For whoever is in this state, even if he were killed on the battle-field, is remote from the like of this rank, as the traditions have indicated.

And, since the meaning of the evil of the Seal and its fearful character have been expounded to you, occupy yourselves in making ready for it and persevere in the recollection of God, and expel from your heart the love of the world, and guard your members against the doing of disobedience, and your heart from reflecting on it. And be vigilant against witnessing acts of disobedience and witnessing those who practise them with all your might, for that also will leave its trace in your heart and thoughts, and impressions will veer off towards it. And beware lest you procrastinate and say: I shall prepare for it, when the Seal comes, for every single breath is your Seal, since it is possible that your spirit may be snatched away in the course of it. So watch over your heart in every twinkling of the eye, and beware lest you neglect it for an instant and so that instant may be *your* Seal, since it is possible that your spirit may be snatched away in the course of it. This, as long as you are awake, and with regard to when you are asleep, take care not to go to sleep except in a state of outward and inward purity and that sleep overcomes you only after the dominance of the recollection of God over your heart. I am not saying over your tongue, for the movement of the tongue by itself is weak in its effect.

Know as conclusive that what dominates your heart at the moment of sleep is only what was dominant over it before sleep, and that nothing is dominant in the course of sleep which was not dominant before sleep, and that nothing is awakened from your sleep except what was dominant over your heart during your sleep. And death and resurrection resemble sleep and awakening. And as the creature does not go to sleep in a state other than that which was dominant over him in his waking life and is not awakened in a state other than that in which he was during his sleep, similarly a man dies as he has lived and is gathered (to judgement) as he

has died. And it is conclusively verifiable and indubitable that death and resurrection are two of your states just as sleep and waking are two of your states. So believe in this, affirming its truth with the assent of the heart, if you are not a party to the seeing of it with the eye of certainty and the light of insight. And conserve your breaths and glances¹ and see to it that you are not neglectful of God for the twinkling of an eye. For, if you do all that, you are, in spite of it, in great peril, and how, if you do not do it? And all men are perishable except the theorists, and the theorists are all perishable except they are practitioners, and the practitioners except they are elect, and the elect are in great peril.

And know that this will not expedite for you what you have not satisfied from this world according to your necessity. And your necessity is food and clothing and dwelling, and the remainder, all of it, is superfluous. And the food which is necessary is what will straighten your back and support your subsistence, and you must obtain it as a distasteful necessity, and your liking for it is not to be more than your liking for what your need decrees, since there is no distinction between inserting food into the stomach and its expulsion, and both are constitutional necessities. And just as what your need decrees is not something which occupies your concern and with which your heart is engaged, so the obtaining of food must not be part of your concern. And know that, if your concern is with what enters your stomach, your standard of value is what is expelled from your stomach. And, if your purpose in

177 eating is nothing but piety in the worship of God, as is your purpose in what your need decrees, the mark of that appears in three matters. From what you eat, in respect of frequency, quantity and quality. With regard to frequency the least is that one should make do with a single meal during a day and night and should persevere in fasting. With regard to quantity that one should not exceed one third of the stomach's capacity; and with regard to quality that one should not seek after culinary pleasures. No; one should be satisfied with whatever chances (to be available). So, if you have power over these three items and the burden of lusts and pleasures falls off from you, you will have power thereafter to forsake equivocal items and it will be easy for you not to eat anything except what He has made permissible; for what is permitted is rare and does not fulfil all that is desired.

¹ See p. 27, n. 3.

With regard to your clothing let your aim in respect of it be the repelling of heat and cold and the covering of nakedness, and everything that repels cold from your head, even if it be a cap worth a farthing. Your seeking other than this is superfluous to you and your time is wasted in it. It will entail for you constant labour and unremitting care in obtaining it, in acquiring on one occasion and yearning after on another what is forbidden and dubious. So take as your measurement in this matter that by which heat and cold are repelled from your body, and so everything which attains to the purpose of clothing. If you are not satisfied with it in the meagreness of its quantity and quality, you will have no halting-place nor point of return thereafter. No; you will be numbered with the man whose stomach nothing but dust will fill.

And similarly for a dwelling, if you are content with its purpose heaven will suffice you as a roof and the earth as a couch. For, if heat or cold overtakes you, there are mosques for you to shelter in. For, if you seek after a specific dwelling, it will be a long business for you, and the most of your life will be spent in it, and your life is your merchandize. Then, if you are prosperous, you will purpose that the wall should do more than afford you privacy and that the roof should do more than repel the rains, and so you will begin raising the walls and adorning the ceilings, and you will have been hurled into a chasm which it will take you a long time to climb out of.

And thus with all the necessary aspects of your affairs, if you confine yourself to them, you will have time to devote to God and will be able to lay in provisions for your after-life and to prepare for your Seal. And, if you go beyond the limit of what is necessary to the wadies of things desired, your concentration will be distracted and God will not be concerned in which wady He destroys you. So offer this advice to whoever is more in need of it than yourself.

And know that the space for estimating and provisioning and taking precautionary measures is this short life, so, if you defer it day after day in your procrastination or neglect, sudden death will snatch at a time other than you would wish, and your regret and repentance will never leave you. So, if you were not able to maintain contact with that towards which you were pointed through the weakness of your fear (since in what we have described of the affair of the Seal there was not sufficient to make you afraid), we shall cite for you concerning the states of those who fear what, we

hope, will remove some of the hardness from your heart. For you will admit as true that the intellect of the prophets and saints and scholars, together with their actions and their status with God, were not inferior to your intellect and actions and status. So reflect on their states, in spite of your impaired insight and the defective-ness of the eye of your heart, why fear was intense within them and grief and weeping protracted in them, so that some of them would swoon, some be beside themselves, some collapse in a faint, and some fall to the ground dead. And it is nothing to wonder at, if that were to make no impression on your heart, for the hearts of the negligent are like stones or even harder, for there are some stones from which rivers come gushing, and some have been split, so that water emerges from them, and some which crash down out of fear of God. God is not heedless of what you do. (Q. ii, 69).

EXPOSITION OF THE STATES OF THE PROPHETS AND ANGELS
IN RESPECT OF FEAR

‘A’isha related that whenever the air was stirred and a tempestuous wind blew, the countenance of the Messenger of God would alter and he would rise up and pace up and down the room and would go in and out. All that because of the fear of the chastisement of God. And he (Muhammad) recited a verse in the Sūra al-Wāqi‘a and then he swooned. And God said: And Moses fell in a swoon. (Q. vii, 139). And the Messenger of God saw the form of Gabriel at 178 Abṭāh¹, and fell in a swoon. And it is related that when he (Gabriel) engaged in prayer, there was heard in his breast a bubbling like that of a cauldron. And he (Muhammad) said: Gabriel never came to me but he was trembling because of his separation from the Almighty.

And it was said: When the news about the Devil was made public, Gabriel and Michael began to weep and God spoke in revelation to them both: What is the matter with the two of you that you are indulging in all this weeping? So they said: O Lord, we are not secure from Your strategems. So God said: Thus it is, you are not secure from My strategems. And according to Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir who said: When the Fire was created, a troop of angels flew up from their places, and, when the sons of Adam were created, they returned. And according to Anas he (Muhammad)

¹ Y., i, 92.

asked Gabriel: Why is it that I do not see Michael laughing? So Gabriel said: Michael has not laughed since the Fire was created. And it is said: Truly in God’s service are angels none of whom has laughed since the Fire was created for fear that God would be enraged against them and would punish them for it.

And Ibn ‘Umar said: I went out with the Messenger of God until he entered one of the enclosures of the Helpers¹ and began to pluck fruit from a palm tree and eat. So he said: O Ibn ‘Umar, why are you not eating? So I said: O Messenger of God, I do not desire it. So he said: But I desire it, and this is the fourth morning I have not tasted food nor found it; and, if I were to ask my Lord, He would give me the Kingdom of the Caesars and Chosroes². So how is it with you, O Ibn ‘Umar, since you have remained among a crowd who lay in their stocks for the year, while assurance is weak in their hearts? He (Ibn ‘Umar) said: And, by God, we did not stir nor rise up until it was revealed: How many a beast bears not its own provision, but God provides for it and you! He is the One who hears and knows. (Q. xxix, 60). He said: So the Messenger of God said: Truly God has not commanded you to hoard up wealth nor to follow lusts. Whoever hoards dinars desires thereby the life that passes away, for life is in the hand of God. I most certainly³ will not hoard either dinars or dirhams or lay up stocks for the morrow.

And Abū ‘l-Dardā’ said that the bubbling of the heart of Abraham, the Friend of the Merciful, through fear of his Lord, was heard at the distance of a mile, when he engaged in prayer. And Mujāhid⁴ said: David wept for forty days prostrate in worship, without lifting his head, so that the pastures sprouted because of his tears and his head was covered over. So he was addressed: O David, are you hungry? If so, you may eat. Are you thirsty? If so, you may drink. Are you naked? If so, you may be clothed. Then he wept so bitterly that he energized the lute, and he was burnt up with the heat of his fear. Then God revealed to him repentance and pardon and he said: O Lord, set my sin in my palm. So his sin was inscribed on his palm, and he did not extend his palm for food and drink or for any other purpose without seeing it, and it made him weep. He

¹ Those who supported Muḥammad in Medina. H.A., 116.

² Romans and Persians.

³ Wright, ii, 168; ȳl.

⁴ T.T., x, 42 (68), d. c. 100/718.

(the narrator) continued: And he was brought a bowl two thirds full, and, when he took it, he saw his sin, and would not put it to his lip until it overflowed with his tears. And it is told of him that he had not raised his head to heaven up till the time of his death out of reverence for God. And he used to say in his supplication: O God, when I recollect my sin, the earth, for all its breadth, hems me in, and, when I recollect Your mercy, my spirit is restored. Praise be to You O God, the physicians among Your creatures have come that they may nurse to health my sin, and they all point me to You. So may reprobation overtake them who despair of Your mercy.

179 And al-Fudayl said: I have heard that David recollected his sin on a certain day and bounded away shrieking, with his hand laid on his head, until he reached the mountains. And the wild beasts gathered to him¹ and he said: Return, I do not desire you. My only desire is for the person weeping because of his sin. So let no one confront me except weeping, and whoever is not a sinner let him not contrive sin for David. And he was chided for his prolific weeping and so he said: Leave me alone. I am weeping before the exit of the day of weeping, before the tearing apart of the bones and the burning of the intestines, and before the angels ordain severe penalties for me. They do not disobey God in respect of what He commands and they perform what they are commanded. And 'Abd al-'Aziz b. 'Umar² said: Whenever David committed a sin, his voice was diminished and he said: O Lord, my voice is hoarse among the pure voices of the *Sincere*. And it is reported that, whenever he wept for a long time and it did not benefit him, his power was straitened and his perplexity intensified and he would say: O Lord, will You not pity my weeping? And God revealed to him: O David, you have forgotten your sin and remembered your weeping. So he said: My God and my Master, in what way do I forget my sin? And yet, when I recited the psalms, the running water desisted from its flow, and the blowing of the wind was stilled, and the birds furnished shade to my head, and the wild beasts were intimates at my palace. O my God and my Master, what then is this alienation which is between me and You? And God revealed to him: That was the intimacy of obedience and this is the alienation of disobedience. O David, Adam was one of My

¹ See G. 50-51.

² T.T., vi, 349 (670), d. c. 150/767.

creatures. I created him with My hand and I breathed into him of My spirit and I made My angels do obeisance to him; and I clothed him in the robe of My preferment, and I crowned him with the unique crown of My dignity and image, and I gave him to wife Eve, My handmaid, and settled him in My Garden. He disobeyed Me, and so I expelled him from My precincts naked and abased. O David, listen to Me and I shall speak the truth. You obeyed Us and We obeyed you; you asked Us and We gave to you; and you disobeyed Us and We showed forbearance to you. And, if you return to Us in your former state, We shall receive you.

And Yāḥyā b. Abī Kathir¹ said: I have heard that it was David's custom when he desired to engage in weeping to pass the time for seven days beforehand neither eating food nor taking drink, nor approaching women. And, when it was a day beforehand, the pulpit was brought out to him to the desert, and he commanded Solomon to cry out with a voice that would cross the countryside and its environs of thickets and hills and mountains and deserts and monastic cells and churches². And in it he proclaimed: Are there not those who desire to hear David's wailing for himself? Let them then come along. He went on: And the wild beasts come from the deserts and the hills and the lions from the thickets and the reptiles from the mountains and the birds from the nests and the virgins from their bowers. And the people assemble for that day and David comes to ascend the pulpit, and the children of Israel surround him, and every kind according to its class surrounds him, and Solomon stands by his side.

So David launches into an encomium of his Lord and breaks into weeping and shrieking. Then he launches into the recollection of the Garden and the Fire, and the reptiles die together with a group of the wild beasts and the lions and the people. Then he launches into the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and into wailing over himself and a group of every class dies. And, when Solomon saw the large numbers of the dead, he said: O father, you have decimated your audience. They are all decimated and sections of the children of Israel and of the beasts and reptiles have died. So he launches into petition, and, while he is in this posture, one of the devotees of the children of Israel calls out to him: O David, you are over-hasty in seeking your reward from your Lord.

¹ T.T., xi, 268 (539) d. c. 130/747.

² Note the anachronisms.

He went on: And David falls in a swoon, and, when Solomon noted what had overtaken him, he brought a mattress and carried him on it. Then he commanded someone to call out: Is there not someone who had a friend or relative with David? Let him then bring a mattress and carry him off, for the recollection of the Garden and the Fire has killed those who were with him. So a woman would bring a mattress and would bear away her relative saying: O you whom the recollection of the Fire has killed. O you whom the fear of God has killed. Then, when David revived, he stood up and placed his hand on his head and entered his chapel and locked its door, saying: O God of David, are You angry with David? And he communed ceaselessly with his Lord. So Solomon arrives and squats at the door and asks for permission to come in. Then he enters and has with him a barley bannock and he says: O father, build up your strength with this according as you desire. So he eats of that cake what God wills and then he goes out to the children of Israel and is in their midst.

And Yazid ar-Raqqāshi¹ said: David went out among the people on a certain day to preach to them and inspire fear in them. And about forty thousand went out and thirty thousand of them died and only about ten thousand returned. He went on: And he had two slave girls whom he had appointed, so that, when fear came to him and he collapsed and was agitated, they squatted on his breast and legs for fear that his limbs and joints would be dismembered and he would die.

And Ibn 'Umar said: John, the son of Zachariah², went into the Jerusalem temple (he was a lad of eight years) and looked at their devotees who were clad in shirts of hair and wool; and he observed their zealots who had bored through their clavicles and inserted chains in them, and fastened themselves to the extremities of the temple. And that filled him with awe. So he made to return to his parents and passed by two lads at play and they said to him: O John, come and play with us. So he said: Truly I was not created for play. He went on: So he came to his parents and asked them to clothe him in hair and they did so, and he returned to the temple, and served in it by day and kept the lamps trimmed by night, until he attained his fifteenth birthday.

Then he went out and haunted the lofty mountains and sub-

¹ T.T., xi, 309 (597), d. c. 115/733.

² i.e. John the Baptist.

terranean paths of the earth. So his parents went out in search of him and they overtook him by the river Jordan, and he had soaked his feet in the water until the thirst was almost killing him, saying the while: By Your Might and Majesty, I will not taste a cool drink, until I know where I stand with You. So his parents asked him to breakfast on a barley bannock which they had with them and to drink some of that water. So he did it and made expiation for the breaking of his oath and commanded filial piety.

Thus his parents brought him back to the temple, and, when he stood praying, he used to weep so that the trees and clods would weep with him, (and Zachariah would weep because of his weeping) until he (John) would go into a faint. And he would weep without remission so that the tears pierced the flesh of his cheeks and his molars were visible to the onlookers. So his mother said to him: O my son would that you would permit me to fetch for you something to cover up your molars from those who look on! So he gave her permission and she procured two pieces of felt and stuck them to his cheeks. So it came about that, whenever he got up to pray, he wept, and, when his tears saturated the two pads, his mother came to him and wrung them out; and, when he saw his tears flowing over his mother's forearms, he said: O God, these are my tears and this is my mother and I am Your creature, and of those who are merciful You are the most merciful. So Zachariah said to him one day: My son, I have asked my Lord to bestow you on me, that my eyes might be refreshed with you. So John said: O my father, Truly Gabriel has reported to me that between the Garden and the Fire there is a desert which only those who weep will cross. So Zachariah said: O my son in that case weep on.

And the Messiah said: O band of disciples, the fear of God and the love of Paradise produce patience in the face of difficulty and keep you at a distance from the world. In truth I say to you: Surely the eating of barley and sleeping on muddens with the dogs is a small price in the quest for Paradise. And it was said: Whenever the Friend¹ recollected his sin, he went into a faint and the commotion of his heart would be heard for miles. Then Gabriel would come and say to him: Your Lord greets you with peace and says: Do I see a friend who fears his Friend? So he would say: O Gabriel, truly, when I recollect my sin, I forget my friendship.

So these are the states of the prophets and see to it that you

¹ i.e. Abraham.

reflect on them, for they are the most 'knowledgeable' of God's creatures concerning God and His attributes. May God's blessing be on them all and on all the creatures of God who are brought near. And our sufficiency is God and the grace of the Trustee¹.

EXPOSITION OF THE STATES OF THE COMPANIONS
AND THE FOLLOWERS AND THE FATHERS AND THE SOUND IN FAITH
IN THE GRIP OF FEAR

It is related that *Abū Bakr*, the *Sincere*, said to a bird: Would that I were like you, O bird, and had not been created as human flesh. And *Abū Dharr*² said: Would that I were a tree which is pruned. And *Talhā*³ said a similar thing. And *‘Uthmān*⁴ said: Would that, when I died, I were not raised. And *‘Ā’iša* said: Would that I became a thing forgotten⁵. And it is related that ‘Umar used to collapse in a faint through fear, whenever he heard a verse from the Qur’ān and was restored after some days. And one day he took up a straw from the ground and said: Would that I were this straw; would that I did not remember anything; would that I were a thing forgotten; would that my mother had not borne me. And on ‘Umar’s face were two black furrows made by tears and he said: Whoever fears God, will not heal his distress, and whoever has reverence for God, will not do what he desires, and were it not for the Day of Resurrection, it would be other than what you see. And, whenever ‘Umar recited: When the sun shall be darkened (Q. lxxxi, 1) and came to His saying: When the pages shall be spread open (Q. lxxxi, 10), he fell in a faint. And he passed by the home of a man one day and he was praying and reciting the Sūra ‘By the Mount’ (Q. lii, 1), and he stopped to listen, and, when he reached His saying: Surely your Lord’s chastisement is about to fall; there is none to avert it (Q. lii, 7-8), he came down from his ass and leaned against a wall and stayed for some time, and returned to his lodging and was ill for a month, with the people visiting him and not knowing what had made him ill.

And ‘Ali said (he had said the *salām* at the close of the dawn

¹ i.e. Muhammad.

² T.T., xii, 90 (401), d. 32/652-3; T. 17.

³ T.T., v, 20 (35), d. 36/656.

⁴ T. 8, d. 35/656; H.A., 176-7.

⁵ Cf. Q. xix, 23.

prayer and sorrow came on him while he was upturning his hand¹): Truly I have seen the Companions of Muhammad and I have not seen anything to-day resembling them. Truly they got up in the morning dishevelled, pallid, with dust between their eyes like a funeral cortege. They had devoted the night to God, prostrate and erect, reciting the Book of God, alternating between their foreheads and their feet. And, when they got up, they recollected God and swayed like trees in a day of gale, and their eyes were swamped with tears, so that their garments were damp. And by God! it is as if I were among a crowd who pass the night in heedlessness. Then he stood up and after that he was not seen laughing, until *Ibn Muljam*² struck him.

And ‘Amrān b. Hūsain³ said: Would that I were ashes, then the wind would scatter me in a day of gale. And *Abū ‘Ubayda* b. al-Jarrāh⁴ said: Would that I were a ram and my family slaughtered me and ate my flesh and sipped my gravy. And it used to be the case with ‘Ali b. al-Husayn⁵ that, whenever he performed his ablutions, his colour became pallid and his family would say to him: What is this that has become habitual with you, whenever you perform your ablutions? So he would say: Do you know before Whom I am minded to stand? (in prayer) And *Mūsā* b. *Mas’ūd*⁶ said: Whenever we granted an audience to *ath-Thawrī*, we were as if the Fire had surrounded us in respect of what we saw of his fear and grief. And *Muḍar*⁷, the Reader, recited on a certain day: This is our Book which speaks the truth against you—to the end of the verse. (Q. xlvi, 28). And *‘Abd al-Wāhiḍ* b. *Zayd*⁸ wept until he swooned; and, when he revived, he said: By Your Might, I have never disobeyed You so far as in me lies, so assist me with Your furtherance that I may obey You.

And *al-Miswar* b. *Makhrāma*⁹ used to be unable to hear anything of the Qur’ān on account of the intensity of his fear. And there

¹ See Hughes, D.I., 468-9. “while he was upturning (or reversing) his hand” is puzzling. I am assuming that the reference is to the upturning of the hands for the *munājāt* (supplication).

² H.A. 182.

³ T.T., viii, 125 (219), d. 52/672.

⁴ T.T., v, 73 (116), d. 18/639.

⁵ T.T., viii, 304 (520), d. c. 94/712; T. 70.

⁶ T.T., x, 370 (657), d. c. 220/835.

⁷ L., vi, 46 (178).

⁸ T.T., vi, 434 (912), d. c. 170/786; T. 237. *Ziyād* in T.T. and T.

⁹ T.T., x, 151 (288), d. 64/683-4.

had been recited in his presence a word and a verse and he gave a shriek and was not mentally composed for days afterwards, until a man from *Khath'am*¹ came upon him and recited to him: On the Day when We shall gather those who show piety to the Merciful like an embassy, and shall drive the sinners to Gehenna like a herd. (Q. xix, 88-89). So he said: I am among the sinners and not among those who show piety. Repeat the saying to me, O Reader. So he repeated it to him and he gave his last gasp and reached the next world. And there was recited in the presence of *Yaḥyā al-Bakkā'*²: If you were to see when they are halted by their Lord. (Q. vi, 30). And he gave a shriek and remained ill because of it for the space of four months, being visited from every corner of Basra.

And Mālik b. Dīnār said: I was circumambulating the House, when I came upon a little slave girl performing her devotions and clinging to the curtains of the Ka'ba, while she said: O Lord, how many a lust there is whose pleasure has departed, and whose consequences have remained! O Lord, do You not possess any other correction and punishment save the Fire? And she was weeping and maintained this her posture until dawn broke. Mālik said: So, when I saw that, I placed my hand on my head, shrieking: I am saying may his mother be bereft of Mālik! And it is related that al-Fudayl was seen on the day of 'Arafa³, and the people were praying and he was weeping the burning hot tears of a woman bereaved, until, when the sun had almost set, he seized hold of his beard; then he raised his head to heaven and said: O woe is me with You⁴, even if You are forgiving. Then he joined himself to the people. And Ibn 'Abbās was asked about those who fear, so he said: Their hearts are ulcerated⁵ by fear and their eyes are tearful. They say: How can we rejoice while death is behind us and the grave before us and the resurrection our rendezvous and our route is by Gehenna and in front of God our Lord is our halting-place?

And al-Ḥasan passed by a youth who was engulfed in his laughter, and he was sitting in the company of a crowd. So al-

¹ Name of a mountain, Y., v, 19.

² I.S., vii², 13.

³ E.I., N.E., vol. i, fasc. 10, 604.

⁴ رأسنَا، Wright, ii, 38 c.

⁵ Reading قرحة (1908) and not فرحة (1939).

Ḥasan said to him: Have you crossed over the Bridge?¹ He said: No. He said: Do you know whether your trend is towards the Garden or the Fire? He said: No. He said: What then does this laughter mean? He (the narrator) said: And that youth was not seen laughing thereafter. And it was the custom of Ḥammād b. 'Abd Rabbīhi when he sat down to sit on his haunches. And it was said to him: I wish you would relax. So he would say: That is the posture of security and I am anything but secure, since I have disobeyed God. And 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz² said: It was for nothing but considerations of mercy that God set this negligence in the hearts of the creatures, in order that they might not die for fear of God. And Mālik b. Dīnār said: Certainly I have been concerned lest, when I die, He will command them to shackle and manacle me; then they will bear me off to my Lord just as the runaway slave is borne off to his master.

And Ḥātim al-Āṣamm³ said: Do not be deceived by a salubrious place, for there is no place more salubrious than the Garden and Adam met his deserts in it. And do not be deceived by the multiplication of worship, for the Devil met his deserts after the length of his worship. And do not be deceived by much knowledge, for Balaam (cf. Nu. xxii f.) used to adorn the Greatest Name of God⁴ and see what he encountered. And do not be deceived by the vision of the sound in faith, for there is no person of greater standing with God than the Elect One (Muḥammad) and neither relations nor enemies were benefited by his encounter (with God).

And as-Sārī⁵ said: Truly I look at my nose several times every day for fear that my face may have been blackened. And Abū Hafṣ⁶ said: For forty years my belief concerning myself has been that God will direct to me a look of severe displeasure and my deeds point towards that. And Ibn al-Mubārak⁷ went out among his companions on a certain day and said: Truly I took a liberty yesterday with God. I asked Him for the Garden. And Umm Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Qurāzī⁸ said to her son: O my boy, truly

¹ See p. 36, n. 4.

² T.T., vii, 475 (790), d. 101/720; T. 112.

³ E. 256; K. 115; d. 237/852.

⁴ Not known except to those initiated into the mystery.

⁵ E. 39 f.; K. 110-11. d. c. 253/867.

⁶ Probably al-Khaṣāf, a friend of al-Muḥāṣibī; E. 38; or Abū Ḥafṣ, al-Haddād of Nishāpur, d. 266/879-880, *Ta'rikh*, ii, 213.

⁷ T.T., v, 382 (657), d. 181/797-8.

⁸ Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Qurāzī. T.T., ix, 420 (689), d. c. 110/728.

I 'know' you as a good child and a virtuous adult, but what you do with your nights and days makes it look as if you had inaugurated a pernicious heresy. So he said: O Mother, what will make me secure from God having come suddenly on me while I was engaged in one of my sins, so that He has taken a loathing to me and said: By My Might and Majesty! I will not pardon you. And al-Fuḍayl said: Truly I do not covet the prophet who is sent or the king who is preferred or the creature who is sound in faith. Will not these encounter the resurrection? The only person whom I covet is he
182 who was not created. And it is recorded that the fear of the Fire entered a stripling among the Helpers, and he was weeping to such an extent that it detained him in the house. So the Prophet came and went in to him and embraced him and he fell dead. So he said: Prepare your companion for burial, for separation from the Fire has crushed his liver.

And it is recorded concerning Ibn Abī Maysara¹ that whenever he retired to his bed he would say: O that my mother had not borne me! So his mother said to him: O Maysara, truly God has made a good job of your guidance towards Islām. He said: Granted, but God has made clear to us that we are those who go down to the Fire, and He has not made clear to us that we shall come up from it. And it was said to al-Farqad as-Sabkī²: Tell us the most wonderful thing you have heard concerning the children of Israel. So he said: I have heard that five hundred virgins entered the Jerusalem temple, their attire being wool and hair-cloth; and they were recollecting God's reward and punishment, and all of them died in a single day.

And 'Aṭā' as-Sulamī³ was one of those who fear and he would never ask God for the Garden; all he would ask for was forgiveness. And it was said to him during his illness: Do you not desire anything? So he said: Surely, fear of Gehenna has not left a place in my heart for desire. And it was said: Truly he did not lift his head to heaven nor laugh for forty years, and he raised his head one day and was stricken with fear and collapsed, and a slit was made in his stomach. And he would feel his body on certain nights for fear that he had been metamorphosed. And whenever a gale or lightning struck them or deafness of food, he would say: This is striking

¹ Abū Maysara, T.T., viii, 47 (78), d. 63/682-3.

² T.T., viii, 262 (486), d. 131/748-9.

³ T.T., vii, 211 (391) d. c. 750 A.D. al-Aslāmī in T.T.

them on my account, would that 'Aṭā' were dead for the relief of the people. And 'Aṭā' said: We went out with 'Uṭba, al-Ghulām¹, and in our company were adults and adolescents, to pray the dawn prayer with the sunset purification. Their legs had become swollen through their long stand, their eyes were sunken in their heads, their skin stuck to their bones, and their veins stood out as if they were whipcords. They became as if their skins were the rinds of water melons and as if they had come out from the grave to report how God preferred the obedient and deposed the disobedient. So, while they were going along, one of them passed by a certain place and he fell in a faint and his companions sat round him weeping on a day when the cold was intense. And his forehead was dripping sweat, so they brought water and wiped his face and he recovered. And they asked him about his experience, so he said: Truly I remembered that I had disobeyed God in that place.

And Ṣāliḥ al-Murri² said: I recited to a man who was one of the devotees: On the Day when their faces will be turned about in the Fire, they will say: O that we had obeyed God and the Messenger. (Q. xxxiii, 66). So he fell in a swoon. Then he revived and said: Give me more of it, O Ṣāliḥ, for I find it perplexing. So I recited: Whenever they wish to come out of it, they will be sent back into it. (Q. xxxii, 20). So he fell dead. And it is reported that Zarāra b. Abī Awfā³ led the people in the morning prayer, and, when he recited: When the Trump is sounded (Q. lxxiv, 8), he fell in a faint and was carried away a corpse. And Yazid ar-Raqqāshī came into the presence of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz and he ('Umar) said: Preach to me, O Yazid. So he said: O Commander of the Faithful, know that you are not the first Caliph to die. So he wept. Then he said: Give me more. He said: O Commander of the Faithful, there is no ancestor between you and Adam who is not a corpse. So he wept. Then he said: Give me more, O Yazid. So he said: O Commander of the Faithful, there is no lodging between you, and the Garden and the Fire. So he collapsed in a faint.

And Maymūn b. Mihrān⁴ said: When this verse was revealed: Surely Gehenna will be the promised land for them all, (Q. xv, 43), Salmān, the Persian⁵, gave a shriek and placed his hand on his

¹ *Ta'rikh*, ii, 211, a disciple of al-Hasan, al-Baṣrī.

² T.T., iv, 382 (641), d. c. 115/733.

³ T.T., iii, 322 (508), d. 93/711-2.

⁴ T.T., x, 390 (803), d. 116/734-5; T. 93.

⁵ I.H., i, 233-42. T.T., iv, 137 (233), d. c. 32/652.

head and went out as a fugitive for three days during which they could not contain him. And Dāwud at-Tā'i¹ saw a woman weeping over the head of her son's grave, while she said: O my son, would that I knew whether or not the worm has bitten you with its industrious nibble. And Dāwud went into a swoon and fell on the spot.

And it was said: Sufyān ath-Thawrī was ill and his symptoms were disclosed to a Dhimmī² physician and he said: Fear has severed the liver of this man. And he came and felt his arteries and said: I did not know there was his like in the Muslim community. And Ahmad b. Hanbal said: I asked God that He would give access to a gate of fear, so He opened up and I was afraid for my reason and said: O Lord, according as I can bear it. So my heart was quietened. And 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr. b. al-'Āṣ said: Weep and, if you cannot weep make a pretence of weeping. By the One in whose hand my soul is, if any of you knew (what was in store) he would scream until his voice was cut off and would pray until his back was broken. And it is as if he pointed to the meaning of his (Muhammad's) saying: If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much.

183 And al-'Anbarī³ said: The Masters of Tradition were assembled at the gate of al-Fuḍayl b. 'Iyād and he came suddenly into their view at a window. He was weeping and his beard was quivering and he said: Get down to your Qur'ān and to prayer. Woe unto you, this is not a time for traditions. This is a time for nothing but weeping and entreaty and humility and prayer like that of a drowning man. Guard your tongue and preserve your mobility and discipline your heart and hold on to what you 'know' and let go what you abhor. And al-Fuḍayl was seen walking on a certain day and it was said to him: Whither bound? He said: I do not know. And he was walking about dejected with fear.

And Dharr b. 'Amr said to his father 'Amr b. Dharr⁴: Why is it that the theologians discourse and no one weeps, whereas, when you discourse, I hear weeping on every side? So he said: O my son, the weeping of the bereaved mother is not like the weeping of the

¹ T.T., iii, 199 (381), d. 206/821.

² *Ahl adh-Dhimma*, people of the covenant or obligation; a term first applied to the *Ahl al-Kitāb*, that is, Jews, Christians and Shābiāns, and later interpreted to include Zoroastrians and others. H.A., 170, n. 3.

³ T.T., x, 194 (324), d. 196/811-12.

⁴ T.T., vii, 444 (731), d. c. 153/770.

woman who is hired. And it is related that a crowd of people halted by a devotee who was weeping and they said: What is it that makes you weep? May God have compassion on you. He said: An ulcer which those who fear find in their heart. They said: And what is it? He said: The fear of the summons for presentation to God. And al-Khawwāṣ¹ used to weep and say in his supplication: I am lifted up in pride and my flesh is too weak to serve You, so embrace me.

And Ṣāliḥ al-Murri said: Ibn as-Sammāk² came up to us once and said: Show me something of the marvels of your devotees. So I brought him to a man who was in his hut in a certain quarter of the town, and we asked permission to enter, and behold! a man who was working with palm fronds and I recited to him: See the shackles and chains upon their necks; they will be dragged into the hot (water), then they will be stoked into the Fire. (Q. xl, 73). And the man gave a gasp and fell in a faint and we went out from his presence and left him in this state. And we went off to another man, and we entered in to him and I recited this verse and he gave a gasp and fell in a faint. So we went off and asked permission to go in to a third man and he said: Enter, if you will not distract me from my Lord. So I recited: That is for him who fears My judgement-seat and fears a threat. (Q. xiv, 17). And he gave a gasp and blood appeared from his nostrils and he wallowed in his blood until it was dried up. So we left him in this state and went out, and I took him on a tour of six persons, from the presence of each we went out, leaving him in a faint. Then I brought him to the seventh and we asked permission to enter and behold! a woman from within the hut saying: Enter. So we entered and behold! a *shaykh* in a trance, sitting in his oratory. So we greeted him, but he did not notice our salutation, and so I said to him in a raised voice: Is there not a morrow appointed for the creature? So the *shaykh* said: In whose Presence? Alas! for you. Then he remained stupefied, opening his mouth and, with a fixed stare, crying out with his weak voice: Alas! Alas! until the voice was cut off. So his wife said: Make your way out, for you will not benefit from him for the moment. And, when that was over, I enquired of the people, and behold! three had revived and three had attained to God. And as for the *shaykh* he remained in his condition, dazed and

¹ K. 153-4 or E. 38 or E. 72.

² G. 43, 48. d. 183/799.

bewildered, for three days, without performing a religious obligation, and, when the three days had passed, he came to his senses.

And Yazid b. al-Aswad¹ used to be of the opinion that he was one of the Foundation Members², and he had sworn that he would never laugh nor sleep in a recumbent position, nor eat butter. So he was never seen laughing nor lying down nor eating butter until he died. And al-Hajjāj said to Sa‘id b. Jubayr³: I have heard that you have never laughed. So he said: How could I laugh with Gehenna ablaze and the manacles installed and the Warders of Hell given their assignment? And a man said to al-Hasan: O Abū Sa‘id: How do you fare? He said: Well. He said: How is your state? So al-Hasan smiled and said: You ask me about my state. What do you suppose concerning people who have travelled in a ship until they were in mid-ocean, and then their ship is broken up and every manjack of them takes hold of a spar. In what state is he? The man said: In a state of great extremity. al-Hasan said: My state is one of greater extremity than theirs.

A woman client⁴ went in to ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and greeted him. Then she took up her stance towards the oratory in his room and she prayed in it with two bows and her eyes conquered her and she was lulled to sleep and was induced to weep in her sleep. Then she was roused and said: O Commander of the Faithful, by God! I have seen a miracle. He said: And what was it? She said: I saw the Fire and its flames were licking its people. Then a bridge⁵ was brought and was placed over the centre of it. So he said: Go on. She said: And ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān⁶ was brought and was borne on it, and he had gone only a little way when the bridge capsized him and he was flung into Gehenna. So ‘Umar said: Go on. She said: Then al-Walid b. ‘Abd al-Malik⁷ was brought and he was borne on it, and he had gone only a little way when the bridge capsized him and he was flung into Gehenna. So ‘Umar said: Go on. She said: Then Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik⁸ was

¹ T.T., xi, 313 (599).

² See Lane, *in loc.*, certain righteous persons of whom the world is never destitute. When one dies, God substitutes another in his place. About forty in number—the same number as those who took part in the Battle of Badr. Hence *abdāl* = Substitutes or Successors. See K. 214.

³ T.T., iv, 11 (14), d. 95/714; T. 71.

⁴ *mawlāt*, a Muslim who was not an Arab. See H.A., 172, n. 6.

⁵ See p. 36, n. 4.

⁶ H.A., 205 f., d. 705 A.D.

⁷ H.A., 221, d. 715 A.D.

⁸ H.A., 203 f., d. 717 A.D.

brought and he had progressed only a little way over it when the bridge capsized him and he was thrown in the same way. So ‘Umar said: Go on. She said: Then you were brought and by God! O Commander of the Faithful—then ‘Umar gave a shriek and fell in a faint. So she came up to his side and began shouting in his ear: O Commander of the Faithful, truly I saw you and by God! you were saved, truly I saw you and by God! you were saved. He (the narrator) went on: And she was calling out and he was shouting and scraping the ground with his feet.

And it is related that Uways al-Qarani¹ used to be present with the story-teller and would be weeping because of his word, and when he recollected the Fire, Uways would give a scream; then he would rise up and make off. So the people would follow him saying: Mad! mad! And Mu‘ādh b. Jabal said: Truly the fear of the believer is not quietened until he leaves behind him the Bridge² of Gehenna. And Tā’us³ used to roll out his mattress and lie down and toss about like a seed in the frying-pan. Then he would leap up and fold it up and would face the *qibla*⁴ until morning and would say: The recollection of Gehenna has dispersed the sleep of those who fear. And al-Hasan, al-Baṣrī said: A man emerges from the Fire after a thousand years. O that I were that man. And he said that solely on account of his fear of eternal punishment and the evil of the Seal. And it is related that he did not laugh for forty years. He (the narrator) went on: And when you saw him squatting, your impression was as if a prisoner had come forward in order that you might strike off his neck. And when he spoke, it was as if he were confronting the next world and were reporting on its sights. And when he was silent, it was as if the Fire were kindled between his eyes. And he was chided for the extremity of his grief and fear, so he said: What makes me secure from God having come suddenly on me, while I was engaged in something which He abhors, and His having taken a loathing to me and said: Be off, for I will not pardon you, since I am dealing with a person who will not co-operate?

And on the authority of Ibn as-Sammāk who said: I preached on a certain day in a meeting and a youth in the crowd stood up

¹ T.T., i, 386 (707); K. 83-4; *Tarīkh*, ii, 211, d. 36/656-7.

² See p. 36, n. 4.

³ T.T., v, 8 (14), d. c. 100/718; T. 83; E. 66 (Tawwūs).

⁴ The direction of prayer. H.A., 118.

and said: O Abū 'Abbās, truly you have preached to-day such a word that I should not care were I never to hear another. I said: And what is it? He said: Your saying: The hearts of those who fear have grasped the duration of the two eternities, whether in the Garden or the Fire. Then he disappeared from my view and so I lost him in the meeting. Or, in another recension: I did not see him, so I enquired about him, and I was told that he was sick and was being visited. So I went to visit him and said: O my brother, what condition is this I see you in? So he said: O Abū 'Abbās, it is the consequence of your saying: The hearts of those who fear have grasped the duration of the two eternities, whether in the Garden or the Fire. He went on: Then he died and I saw him in sleep and I said: O my brother, how did God deal with you? He said: He has pardoned me and shown me compassion and given me entrance to the Garden. I said: By what means? He said: By means of the word.

And these are the things which terrify the prophets and saints and scholars and sound in faith, and fear is more appropriate to us than to them. But fear does not go along with a multitude of sins; no, it goes along with purity of heart and perfection of 'knowledge'. And, if not, then He has not given us a feeling of security because of the paucity of our sins and the multitude of our acts of obedience. No; our lusts have driven us and reprobation has prevailed over us and our heedlessness and hardness have obstructed us from inspecting our states. So that neither the nearness of the journey will rouse us, nor the multitude of sins move us, nor the witnessing of the states of those who fear terrify us, nor the danger of the Seal disquiet us. So let us ask God to overtake our states with his bounty and generosity and so make us whole, if the movement of the tongue in asking, totally unsupported by self-help, will benefit us.

And among the things to be wondered at is that, when we desire wealth in this world, we sow and plant and trade and cross over seas and deserts and incur risks. And, if we seek after the status of knowledge, we study and become fatigued in retaining it, and repeating it, and pass sleepless nights. And we are energetic in the search for our provisions and do not rely on the pledge of God to us, and do not sit in our houses and say: O God provide for us. Then, when our eyes are lifted towards the Kingdom¹ which is

¹ See p. 68, n. 1.

enduring and does not pass away, we are content to say with our tongues: O God pardon us and show us compassion. And by the One to Whom we return, and by the One in Whom is our boast! He will call out and say: A man gets exactly the result of his striving. (Q. liii, 40). And with regard to God, let not the beguiler beguile you. (Q. xxxi, 33; xxxv, 5). O man, what has deceived you as to your generous Lord? (Q. lxxxii, 6).

Then all that does not rouse us nor bring us out from the wadies of our delusions and wishful thoughts, and what is this if not a fearful trial were it not that God bestows sincere repentance on us by grace, overtaking us with it and protecting us. So let us ask God to bestow penitence on us. More; let us ask Him to drive towards repentance the secret things of our hearts and not to make the movement of the tongue in asking for repentance the limit of our portion. For, in that case, we should be among those who say and do not act, who hear and are not receptive. When we hear the sermon, we weep, and when the time for action comes in connection with what we have heard, we are disobedient. And there is no mark of alienation greater than this. So let us ask God to bestow on us success and direction through His grace and bounty.

And we shall cut short our recital of the states of those who fear to what we have cited. For a little of this will confront the receptive heart and will suffice, whereas much of it, even if it overflows the negligent heart, will not be adequate.

Truly the monk spoke the truth of whom 'Isā b. Māl'ik, al-Khawlāni, (he was one of the most elect of the devotees) related that he saw him halted at the gate of the Jerusalem temple with the appearance of one grief-stricken through extreme dejection, his tears hardly ever dry, because of the profusion of his weeping. And 'Isā said: When I saw him, his aspect terrified me and I said: O monk, lay an obligation on me to keep on your authority. So he said: O my brother, with what would I command you if you are able to occupy the place of a man whom wild beasts and reptiles have surrounded, and who is fearful and watchful, fearing lest he may be negligent and so the beasts will maul him, or distracted and the reptiles sting him. So his heart is filled with fear and terror, and he passes his nights in fear, even if those who delude themselves feel secure, and his days in grief, even if the empty-headed make merry. Then he turned his back on me and left me. So I said: Will you not tell me something more, perhaps it

would benefit me? So he said: The smallest quantity of water satisfies the thirsty man. And he certainly spoke the truth, for fear will move soonest the heart which is pure, but every warning glances off the heart which is hardened.

And what he mentioned in his hypothesis is that wild beasts and reptiles had surrounded him. And so one ought not to suppose that it is (merely) hypothetical. No, it is reality, for, if you were to view your inner man with the light of insight, you would see it filled with different kinds of wild beasts and species of reptiles, like anger, lust, rancour, envy, pride, self-esteem, self-righteousness and the rest. And it is these which are constantly mauling you and stinging you, if you neglect them for an instant, except that your eye is veiled from the sight of them. So, when the cover is withdrawn and you are placed in your grave, you will encounter them and they will be imaged to you according to the forms and shapes which suit their respective meanings. So you will see with your eye scorpions and snakes and they will surround you in your grave. And these are nothing but the attributes present to you now whose forms have been disclosed to you. So, if you desire to slay and subdue them, you are able for it before death. So do it. But, if you do not, you will become habituated to stings and bites in the kernel of your heart, how much more in your outer flesh.

AND FARE YOU WELL

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(d) LIST OF SŪFĪ TECHNICAL TERMS TRANSLATED

<u>dhikr</u>	recollection	rajā'	hope
fikr	reflection	riḍā	satisfaction
hidāya	guidance	şabır	patience or fortitude
ḥāl	state	şukr	gratitude
<u>ikhlāṣ</u>	single-mindedness	ṣidq	sincerity
karama	preferment or charisma	taqwā	piety
<u>khawf</u>	fear	tawḥid	Unitarianism
mahabba	love	uns	intimacy
maqām	station	wara'	abstinence
ma'rifa	'knowledge' or gnosis	wiṣāl	union
muhāsaba	self-examination		
mujāhada	spiritual combat	yaqīn	assurance
murāqaba	vigilance		